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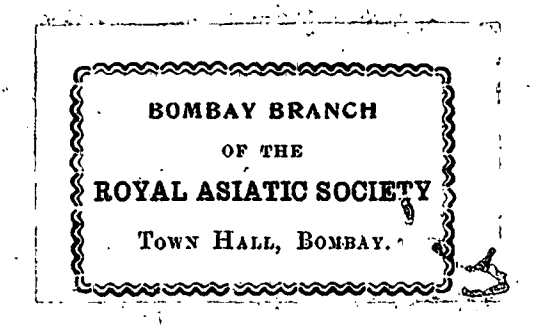

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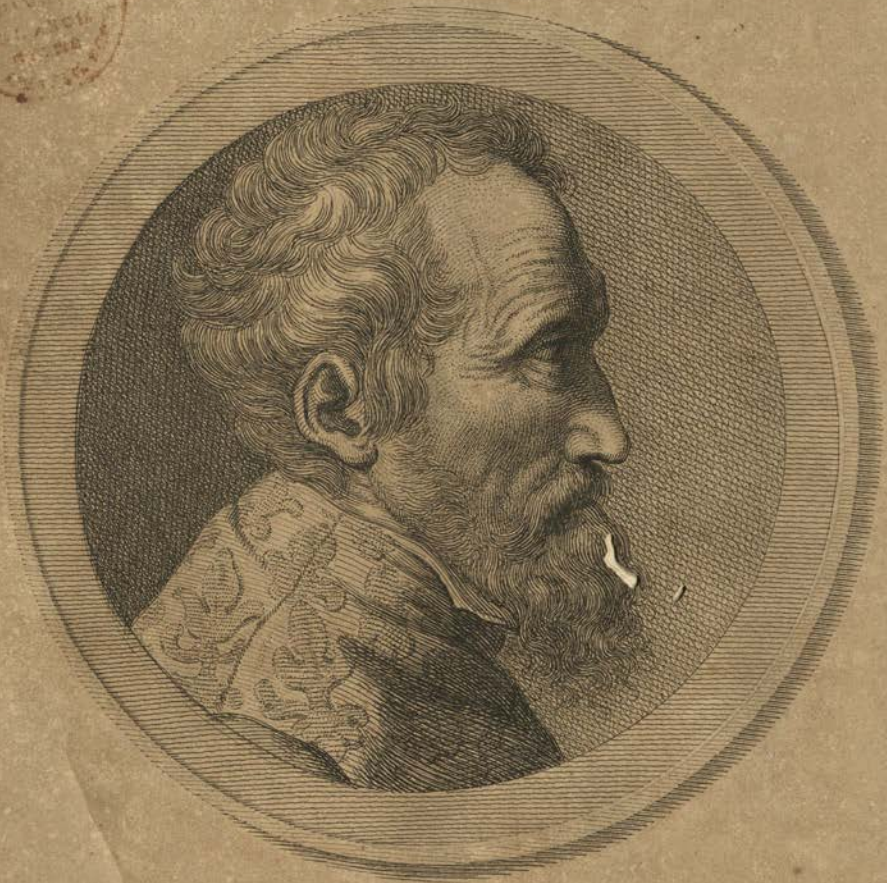

MICHAEL ANGELUS BONARROTUS

NAT. M.CCCC.LXXIV. OB. M.D.LXIII.

THE LIFE

AND

LITERARY WORKS

OF

MICHEL ANGELO BUONARROTI.

By R. Duppa.

ΜΩΜΗΣΕΤΑΙ ΤΙΣ ΜΑΛΛΟΝ Η ΜΙΜΗΣΕΤΑΙ.
ΖΕΤΞΙΣ.

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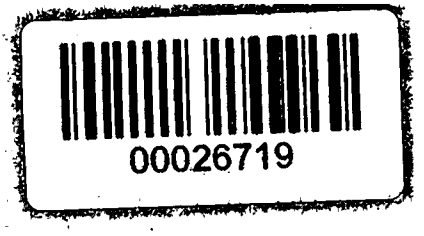
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TO

JOHN SYMMONS, ESQ. F.R.S.

&c. &c. &c.

SIR,

For attentions and kind acts of friendship, permit me to dedicate the following sheets to you. They are the best tribute I can offer; and it is with pleasure I avail myself of this opportunity to express my obligation to one, who has made the Arts and Sciences and Belles-Lettres his study and amusement, and whose time and fortune have been employed to promote establishments for their advancement and the national honour.

The present Work has been written with diligence and care; and, though little information be added to those who have made the Arts their profession, or Italian literature their study, if I have been fortunate enough to concentrate

in one connected whole that which is to be derived from various sources of information, my work may be found useful, if not instructive. Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, in every civilized state, have hitherto constituted part of its refinement; and as talent ranks in our estimation by the quantity of intellect that is employed, the Roman and Florentine schools deserve the most serious attention by those who are desirous that the Arts should have a place with the other acquirements of the human mind.

That this great end may be obtained by the exertions which are made, and the various institutions established in this country for their promotion, is the ardent wish of,

SIR,

Your very sincere,

and much obliged

humble servant,

R. DUPPA.

LONDON,
May 1, 1806.

PREFACE.

MANY years before the death of Michel Angelo, were published two biographical tracts; one by Vasari, the other by Condivi; both equally admirers of his genius, and panegyrists of his fame. Condivi prematurely published his, of which he has given the following account, to apologize for its defects. "I was collecting and arranging my materials, when some unforeseen circumstances arose, which, for two reasons, obliged me to accelerate, nay even precipitate, my biography. In the first place, because some have been employing themselves in writing about this great man, who have not been so well acquainted with him as I am (so I believe); in consequence of which they have said what is not true, and omitted many things that deserve particularly to be known. Secondly, some persons to whom I intrusted my plans and information, have availed themselves of my knowledge, as if to appropriate it to their own honour and advantage: therefore, to supply the defects of the former, and to prevent the injury of the latter, I resolved to give this life of Michel Angelo to the public, imperfect as it is; and what remains to be said, I will communicate to the world at a future time with more deliberation." This work is rather an assemblage of crude materials, where all the facts have an equal importance, than a Life, where any discrimination of character is marked, or the parts

united to compose a whole. Of the author himself nothing is known, except what is to be collected from his title-page, dedication, and preface, which affords this information: that he was a native of Ripa Transone, in La Marca, and studied painting under the direction of Michel Angelo. From the dedication it would seem he was particularly noticed and patronized by Julius III. under the auspices of whose name his book was published July 16, 1553, in 4°. containing fifty pages, with this title, "Vita di Michelagnolo Buonarroti, raccolta per Ascanio Condivi da la Ripa Transone. In Roma appresso Antonio Blado Stampatore Camerale nel M. D. LIII. alli XVI. di Luglio." According to the celebrated Beyero [a], this edition is one of the scarcest books in Europe: in the year 1746, Gori republished it in folio, from the only copy he was able to find in Florence.

The name of Giorgio Vasari is well known; but as his work never appeared in an English dress, a brief account of the author may not be unacceptable, to shew the origin of that compendium of biography which has contributed so much to the amusement and information of succeeding times.

Vasari was born at Arezzo, in the year 1512, and was taught the rudiments of drawing by his father, and the first principles of painting by Gulielmo Mazzilla, a Frenchman. He was taken to Florence by Cardinal da Cortona, where he improved himself under Michel Angelo, Andrea del Sarto, and other eminent masters.

[a] Beyero's work is entitled, Memoriæ Historico-criticæ Librorum rariorum. 8°. Dresdæ et Leipsiæ apud Fridericum Hekel, 1734.

By the Cardinal he was introduced into the Medici family, where he was noticed by Alessandro and Ippolito. In the year 1527, when they were driven from Florence, he returned to his native city; but an epidemic disease prevailing in Arezzo, he spent his time in the surrounding country, improving himself by painting subjects of devotion for the farmers. His father unfortunately died of the contagion, and left a young family unprovided for. Vasari, to contribute more effectually to their support, quitted the uncertain profession of a painter, and applied himself to learn the more lucrative trade of a goldsmith. In the year 1529, the civil war, which then existed in Florence, obliged the goldsmiths' company to remove to Pisa; and there, receiving commissions to paint some pictures both in oil and in fresco, he was induced to resume his former profession, and afterward through life met with encouragement, that left him neither motive nor desire to change.

Ottaviano de' Medici was his great friend, and always treated him as his own son: by the Dukes of Florence, and other distinguished persons, he also enjoyed the most liberal patronage, and was constantly employed in works both profitable and honourable to himself.

In the year 1544, by the friendship of Messer Giovio[b], he was recommended to make designs and paint a hall for the Cardinal Farnese, in Rome. While he was executing this work, he attended the Cardinal's evening parties, which

[b] Messer Giovio was the historian, and bishop of Nocera, better known to us by his Latin name Paulus Jovius.

were frequented by literary persons and men of genius. At one of these parties M. Giovio, speaking of his own museum arranged and embellished with inscriptions and portraits of illustrious men, said, "That it had always been his desire to add to it, and make his book of eulogiums more complete, by a treatise on the celebrated artists, from Cimabue down to his own time;" and enlarged upon the subject with much general information. The Cardinal then turned to Vasari, and asked him, "If he did not think that subject would make a fine work?" Vasari concurred with his Eminence, but added, "That it would require the assistance of an artist to collate the materials and arrange them in their proper order; for, although M. Giovio displayed great knowledge in his observations, yet he had not been equally accurate in the arrangement of his facts." "You can then," replied the Cardinal, "give him assistance, which will be doing an essential service to the arts."

To pay a proper deference to so flattering an opinion, he applied himself to collect such materials as he thought necessary to the plan then suggested; and the information he contributed was drawn up so much to Messer Giovio's satisfaction, that he recommended him to enlarge upon it, and make a more complete work, alledging his own want of leisure and capacity to do justice to such an undertaking. Vasari, with reluctance, consented; and with his own industry, and some assistance from others, he fulfilled his task; and in the year 1550, published his work in two volumes, entitled, Vite de' più eccellenti Pittore Scultori e Architetti scritte da Giorgio Vasari, &c. In 1567 he reprinted it in three volumes quarto, with portraits of the

painters cut in wood, and with the addition of his own life to the fifty-fifth year of his age [c].

He died in 1574, and in the year 1588 his nephew published a work to commemorate and honour his uncle's abilities, entitled, " Ragionamenti del Sig. Cavaliere Giorgio Vasari Pittore ed Architetto sopra le invenzioni da lui dipinte in Fiorenza nel palazzo di Loro Altezzé Serenissime,— insieme con la invenzione della pittura da lui cominciata nella cupola," &c. It is not, however, to Painting that Vasari is indebted for his present fame, but to his miscellaneous work; which, though crude and incorrect, affords the most ample source of our information concerning the painters of Italy before his time, or contemporary with himself. As an artist he had little originality, and the extravagances of genius mark the most predominant feature of his style.

In using the materials supplied by these biographers, I have exercised my own judgment with respect to Michel Angelo's works. From the same data, opinions may be still formed not less authentic, and perhaps with more impartiality, than by contemporary men; but I have not omitted any facts or anecdotes worthy of credit. Besides these authors, I have examined all the writers of that age which could be supposed to throw any light upon my subject, by which means I have corrected some mistakes in Vasari and Condivi, and added to their stock of information.

[c] The edition I have uniformly quoted and referred to in the present work, is that by Giovanni Bottari, in quarto, printed in Rome 1760.

The outlines at the end of the volume are given to compensate the English reader for the same number of sheets of Italian poetry, that may be wanting in interest to those who are not conversant with the language; but which were thought necessary to make the literary part of this work more complete.

As various modes have been chosen by different authors to write Michel Angelo's name, it might be required of me to give a reason why that has been preferred which I have used. In the time of Michel Angelo orthography was not reduced to a standard, and every province in Italy spelt agreeably to the dialect most familiar to the writer: from the peculiar hiatus of the Tuscan, Angelo (an Angel) is always pronounced Agnolo; the same word by the Bolognese is pronounced Angiolo; and Ariosto, who was a native of Modena, where the same custom prevailed, has used that orthography; the Venetians, with their recitative dialect, often change the (g) into a (z), and call the same word Anziolo; but as the Roman pronunciation is universally allowed to be the best, and the Academy della Crusca having given the preference to Angelo, I have adopted it. In Michael I have omitted the letter (a), that both the words might be pure Italian. Buonarroti, the surname of the family, must still be left for any one to choose what orthography is most agreeable to his fancy. The word is compounded of two, which, if translated into English, would be "well arrived;" Buonarroto, in old Italian, being the same in its import as Buonagiunta. This word Michel Angelo himself wrote in many different ways as I have seen in his own hand-

writing, and there are four varieties in the signatures to the letters which make a part of this volume: I have therefore chosen, as the best, that which was adopted by the author of "La Fiera e La Tancia."

The Edition consists of two hundred copies.

THE LIFE

OF

MICHEL ANGELO BUONARROTI.

In Italy the arts had been progressive from the time of their revival by Cimabue and Giotto, but arrived at their highest distinction in the age of Michel Angelo Buonarroti. This celebrated painter, sculptor, and architect, was born in the castle of Caprese, in Tuscany, on the 6th of March, 1474[a]; and descended from the noble and illustrious family of the Counts of Canossa[b]. When he was

[a] The Florentines at this period commenced their æra, not from the nativity of Christ, but from the 25th of March being the Annunciation.

[b] 'The eminent painter and sculptor Michel Angelo Buonarroti was descended from the noble and illustrious family of the counts of Canossa, of the territory of Reggio, and was allied to the imperial blood. Beatrice, sister of Henry II. was given in marriage to Count Boniface of Canossa, then lord of Mantua, from which marriage was born the Countess Matilda, a woman of exemplary prudence and religion: who, after the death of her husband Godfrey, continued to possess in Italy, besides Mantua, Parma and Reggio, that part of Tuscany now called the Patrimony of St. Peter. After a life spent in the service of religion, she died, and was buried in the Abbey of St. Bernard, out of Mantua, which she had built and munificently endowed.'

born, his father, Lodovico di Leonardo Buonarroti Simone, was Podestà, or Governor of Caprese and Chiusi [c]. At this period the sublime science of astronomy was made subservient to judicial astrology, and the prediction of events

[a] A. M. Simone, of that Family, in the year 1250, coming to Florence in the quality of *Podestà*, merited, by his good qualities, to be made a citizen and head of a Sestiere, or district; the city then being divided into municipalities, which are now called Quarters. The Guelf party then reigned in Florence, and from them he received so many favours, that from being of the party of Ghibellino he became a Guelf, and changed the emblazoning of his arms from a dog argent rampant, with a bone in his mouth, in a field gules, to a dog or, in a field azure; and from the lords of the city he afterwards received five lilies gules in a fret, and a crest with two bull's horns, one or, the other azure, as may be now seen on their ancient shields. The old arms of M. Simone may be seen in the palace, by him caused to be executed in marble, as was usual with the greater part of those who filled that situation.'

[b] The reason why the family in Florence changed the name from that of Canossa to Buonarroti, was as follows:—The name of Buonarroti had been in the family from age to age, almost without exception, even down to the time of Michel Angelo, who had also a brother called Buonarroti; who we find, from the annals of the city, was supreme magistrate when Leo X. visited Florence; and as many of these Buonarroti had enjoyed the highest honours in the republic, so the name had been often introduced, and by common usage became at length the surname of the family; which is not at all to be wondered at, since it was the custom in Florence, in the scrutiny of names qualified to hold any office in the state, after the name of the citizen to join that of the father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, and sometimes even other names; hence the name of Buonarroti was perpetuated, as well as that of Simone, who was the first in Florence of the family of the house of Canossa: thus they were called Buonarroti Simone, which is the family name at this day. When Leo X. went to Florence, among many privileges that he conferred upon that house, he permitted the family to add to their arms the azure ball of the house of Medici, with three lilies or.'

Ascanio Condivi vita di Michel Angelo Buonarroti.

[c] Chiusi was a fortress of some importance in the commonwealth of Florence. In the infancy of the Roman republic it was the ancient Clusium; the capital of Etruria in the time of Porsenna, by opposition to whose power Horatius Coclès and Mutius Scævola immortalized their names.

by the position and supposed influence of the heavenly bodies was a superstition pervading all ranks of people. Attention to the imaginary phenomena of this occult science was not neglected at the birth of Michel Angelo, whose future celebrity, according to his biographers, was thus favourably augured. 'Mercury and Venus were in conjunction with Jupiter for the second time, demonstrating a 'benign aspect, and plainly shewing that the child would 'be a very extraordinary genius, whose success would be 'universal; but particularly in those arts which delight the 'sense, such as painting, sculpture, and architecture.'[d]

When the time of his father's official situation expired, he returned to Florence, and sent his infant son to be nursed at his villa called Settignano[e], intrusted to the care of a woman who was the wife of a stone-mason, and who was also the daughter of a person of the same employment; hence Michel Angelo sometimes facetiously remarked, that it was no wonder he was delighted with a chisel, since it was given to him with his nurse's milk.

When the child was of a proper age, Lodovico, perceiving he had talents, was desirous of educating him for some learned profession, and sent him to one Francesco d'Urbino, who at that time kept a grammar school in

[d] *Condivi vita di Michel Angelo, sect.* iv.

[e] This villa was situated three miles distant from Florence, and was among the first acquisitions that M. Simone da Canossa purchased when he came into Tuscany, and belonged to the family at the time when Condivi wrote.

Florence, to receive the rudiments of his education. But although he is said to have made some progress, yet, agreeably to the superstitious astrology of his time, heaven and nature interposed, and, instead of his becoming attached to books, his mind was fascinated by painting. Drawing was his amusement and his study, and whenever he could steal any time, it was devoted to that pursuit. He sought acquaintance with the students in painting, and among others became particularly intimate with one Francesco Granacci[f], a pupil of Domenico Ghirlandaïo, who seeing his fondness for drawing, encouraged and assisted him; he lent him designs to copy, and took him to his master's house, and other places where any work of art could afford him instruction. The advantages of this attention, joined to his natural disposition, so influenced his feelings, that he entirely neglected his studies at school. His father and his uncles, perceiving this bias of his mind, often treated him harshly, conceiving that the arts would degrade the dignity of the family, if followed as a profession. His inclination was paramount to their objections, and, although the displeasure it produced was a source of great uneasiness, yet

[f] Francesco Granacci was born in the year 1477, and died, according to Baldinucci, on the second of December, 1544. As I have never seen any of his works, I am ignorant of his merit; he does not appear to have painted much; he was independent in his circumstances, and considered his profession rather as an amusement than a lucrative employment. Vasari says, that he was a man of agreeable manners and conversation, and enjoyed the pleasures of society.

he was so delighted in the pursuit that he irresistibly continued it. He copied the studies Granacci used to lend him from his master's portfolio with such success, that his partiality for that mode of spending his time daily increased, and his father at length perceiving it was hopeless to give his mind any other direction, resolved, by the advice of his friends, to place him under Domenico Ghirlandaïo, who had then a numerous school of pupils, and was himself not only the most eminent painter in Florence, but one of the most celebrated in Italy [g].

From an original document preserved by Vasari, it appears that he was articled, on the first of April, 1488, to Domenico Ghirlandaïo and his brother David for three years, who were to teach him the art and practice of painting, and were besides to allow him twenty-four florins for that time; six florins for the first, eight for the second, and ten for the third year [h]. This engagement, how-

g Domenico Ghirlandaïo was so called from his partiality for ornamenting his children's heads with garlands, and from being the first painter who adopted that practice. His real name was Domenico di Tommaso di Currado di Gordi, and was born in Florence in 1451; he died of a fever in 1495. He had distinguished reputation, and was employed in all the public works of his time. Sixtus IV. sent for him to Rome to unite his talents with Luca Signorelli, Pietro Perugino, and others, to decorate the chapel built by that pontiff in the Vatican, called the Capella Sistina. He was the first artist who rejected the false taste of introducing gold and silver ornaments into pictures, and shewed that they might be imitated in oil colours with a much more harmonious effect.

h '1488 ricordo Questo dì primo d'Aprile, come io Lodovico di Lionardo di Buo-
' narroti acconcio Michel Angelo mio figliuolo con Domenico e David di Tommaso di

ever, seems not to have been completely fulfilled, but it is nevertheless an honourable testimony of his merit; for those talents must have been unequivocal, when an eminent artist, at the head of his profession, was induced to give a salary, however small, where it was customary for the pupil not to receive, but to pay the premium.

From this situation Michael Angelo might be supposed to derive every advantage, but Ghirlandaïo had the character of having envy in his disposition, which felt no pleasure in the most distant prospect of a rival; and from this circumstance Condivi has asserted that he reaped no benefit from his instructor[1].

' Curado per anni tre prossimi avvenire con questi patti, e modi, che il detto Michel ' Angelo debba stare con i sopraddetti detto tempo a imparare a dipignere e a fare detto ' essercizio, e ciò i sopraddetti gli comanderanno; e detti Domenico, e David gli deb- ' bon dare in questi tre anni fiorini ventiquattro di suggello: e il primo anno fiorini ' sei, il secondo anno fiorini otto, il terzo fiorini dieci in tutta la somma di lire 96,' e appresso vi è sotto questo ricordo, o questa partita scritta pur di mano di Lodovico: ' Hanne avuto il sopraddetto Michel Angelo questo dì 16 d'Aprile fiorini due d'oro in ' oro, ebbi io Lodovico di Lionardo suo padre da lui contanti lire 12. 12.'

Vasari vita di Michel Angelo.

1 ' Ghirlandaïo always shewed envy when praise was bestowed on any juvenile work of Michel Angelo, and, in order to diminish his credit, used to say that ' it came out of his study, thereby meaning to insinuate that he himself had some ' hand in it. One day, when Michel Angelo requested the loan of his book of ' portraits, in which were painted shepherds with their dogs, views, buildings, ruins, ' and similar studies, he refused him. And in truth he had the name of being ' envious, for it was not to Michel Angelo alone he was little courteous, but even to- ' ward his own brother, who, when he saw him likely to eclipse his reputation, on ' giving great hopes of future eminence, he sent him into France, not so much for his ' advantage as some were disposed to say, as for himself to remain in Florence without ' a rival. This little digression I have been the more induced to make, as I am told that

Granacci was his constant friend and companion: they studied together, and probably helped each other in their pursuits. The first attempt Michel Angelo made in oil painting was with his assistance: he lent him colours and pencils, and a print[k] representing the story of St. Antony beaten by devils, which he copied on a pannel with such success that it was much admired. In this little picture, besides the figure of the saint, there were many strange forms and monsters, which he was so intent on representing in the best manner he was capable, that he coloured no part without referring to some natural object. He went to the fish-market to observe the form and colour of fins, and the eyes of fish; and whatever in nature constituted a part of his composition he studied from its source. About this time he made a fac-simile of a picture, which his biographers have recorded to shew his skill in imitation. A head had been given him to copy, and he imitated it so well, that, to try his success, he returned his own copy instead of the original picture to the person from whom it was borrowed, and the deceit was not immediately

'the son of Ghirlandaïo was used to attribute the excellence of Michel Angelo to the 'instruction he received from his father, who never gave him the least assistance, al- 'though Michel Angelo never complained of it, and was even accustomed to speak 'well of his abilities and his behaviour.' *Condivi vita di Michel Angelo* —Vasari is very angry with Condivi for publishing this account; but, like an angry man, he only endeavours to make plausibility supply the place of fact, and leaves the testimony unrefuted.

[k] Vasari says, this print was engraved by *Martino Tedesco*, but there remains some doubt who this German artist was: Mariette is of opinion that his name was Martin Schoën, whose prints are known by this monogram M † S.

perceived; but having told one of his associates, who began to laugh, it was discovered. To add to the deception, he smoaked his copy so as to make it appear of the same age as the original.

Whatever might be the benefit of the instruction he derived from others, he rapidly surpassed his contemporary students, and adopted a stile of drawing and design more bold and daring than Ghirlandaïo had been accustomed to see practised in his school; and, from an anecdote Vasari tells, it would seem Michel Angelo soon felt himself even superior to his master. One of the pupils copying a female portrait from a drawing by Ghirlandaïo, he took a pen and made a strong outline round it on the same paper, to shew him its defects; and the superior stile of the contour was as much admired as the act was considered confident and presumptuous[1]. His great facility in copying with accuracy whatever objects were before him, was exemplified in an instance that forced a compliment even from Ghirlandaïo himself. His master being employed in S. Maria Novella, in Florence; Michel Angelo taking advantage of his absence, drew the scaffolding, the desks, the painting utensils and apparatus, and some of the young men who were at work, with so much correctness and ability, says Vasari, that Ghirlandaïo

[1] This drawing Vasari had in his possession, and being in Rome in the year 1550, he shewed it to Michel Angelo, who recollected it with pleasure, and modestly remarked, 'I knew more of this part of my art when I was a young man, than I do now 'in my old age.' *Vasari vita di Michel Angelo.*

when he returned was quite astonished, and said it was rather the performance of an experienced artist than of a scholar.

At this period Lorenzo de' Medici was desirous of establishing a school for the advancement of sculpture, regretting its mediocrity in comparison with the state of painting. He therefore made a garden in Florence near to the Piazza of St. Mark, which he amply supplied with antique statues, basso-relievos, busts, &c. and appointed one Bertoldo, who had been a pupil of Donatello[m], superintendant, or keeper. When this arrangement was made, Lorenzo requested Ghirlandaïo to permit any of his scholars to study there, who were desirous of drawing from the antique. Of this indulgence Granacci and his friend availed themselves, and from that time the Medici Garden became the favourite school of Michel Angelo.

[m] " Lorenzo aveva fatto fare il Giardino, ch' è ora in sù la piazza di San Marco, solamente perchè lo teneva pieno di figure antiche di marmo, e pitture assai, e tutte eccellenti, solo per condurre una scuola di giovani, i quali alla scultura, pittura, e architettura attendessino a imparare, sotto la custodia di Bertoldo scultore, già discepolo di Donatello, i quali giovani, tutti o la maggior parte furono eccellenti; fra quali fu uno il nostro Michelagnolo Buonarroti, che è stato lo splendore, la vita, e la grandezza della scultura, pittura, e architettura." *Vasari Ragionamenti*, p. 74.

' Dolendosi adunque Lorenzo, che amor grandissimo portava alla pittura, e alla scultura, che ne' suoi tempi non si trovassero scultori celebrati, e nobili, come si trovavano molti pittori di grandissimo pregio, e fama, deliberò di fare una scuola; e per questo chiese a Domenico Ghirlandaïo, che se in bottega sua avesse de' suoi giovani, che inclinati fossero a ciò, gli inviasse al giardino, dove egli desiderava di essercitarli e creargli in una maniera, che onorasse se, e lui, e la città sua. Laonde da Domenico gli furono per ottimi giovani dati fra gli altri Michelagnolo, e Francesco Granacci.'

Vasari vita di Michel Angelo.

No sooner had he entered upon his studies here, than seeing a student modelling some figures in clay, he felt an emulation to do the same, and Lorenzo, who frequently visited the gardens, observing his progress, encouraged him with expressions of approbation. He was, not long after, desirous to try his skill in marble, and being particularly interested with a mutilated old head, or rather a mask representing a laughing Faun, he chose it for his original. At that time there were many persons employed in the garden making ornaments for a library which Lorenzo was decorating: from one of these workmen he begged a piece of marble sufficiently large for his purpose, and was also accommodated with chisels and whatever else was necessary to execute his undertaking. Although this was his first essay in sculpture, he in a few days brought his task to a conclusion; with his own invention supplied what was imperfect in the original, and made some other additions. Lorenzo visiting his garden as usual, found Michel Angelo polishing his mask, and thought it an extraordinary work for so young an artist; nevertheless he jestingly remarked, 'You have restored to the old Faun all his teeth, but don't you know that a man of such an age has generally some wanting?' Upon this observation Michel Angelo was impatient for Lorenzo's absence, that he might be alone to avail himself of his criticism; and immediately, on his retiring, broke a tooth from the upper jaw, and drilled a hole in the gum to represent its having fallen out.

When Lorenzo made his next visit, he immediately saw the alteration, and was delighted with the aptness and simplicity of his scholar; he laughed exceedingly, and related the incident to his friends as an instance of docility and quickness of parts [n]. From this circumstance Lorenzo resolved to take him under his own immediate patronage, and desired the young artist to tell his father he wished to have some conversation with him.

Michel Angelo went home and delivered his message; his father immediately guessed why he was sent for, and it was with the greatest difficulty he could be prevailed upon to go. He lamented that Granacci had led his son astray to follow a profession that was dishonourable to the family, and declared he would never give his consent that he should be a stone-mason. Granacci endeavoured to explain to him the difference between that mechanical occupation and the profession of a sculptor; but the old man was little disposed to hear his reasoning, and less to be convinced; nevertheless he felt it his duty to wait upon Lorenzo the Magnificent.

Lorenzo received him with his accustomed courtesy and politeness, and, after some previous conversation, asked him if he would resign his son to his care, and permit him

[n] This mask was preserved in the Florence gallery when I visited that city in the year 1798. It has been engraved in Gori's edition of Condivi, but with little success.

to be adopted into his family; Lodovico consented with deference and a due sense of the obligation. Lorenzo then offered his services to Lodovico himself, desiring to assist him, and enquired his profession; to which he replied, 'I have never followed any profession, but have always lived upon my slender income, taking care of some little possessions left to me by my ancestors, and have used my diligence not only to preserve but improve them.' 'Well,' replied Lorenzo, 'look round in Florence, and if any thing should occur that might suit you, you may command me to the extent of my power[o].'

Michel Angelo was provided with a room, and every accommodation that could be desired, in the house, or rather the palace of Lorenzo. He sate at his table as his own son, and was introduced to men of rank and genius, where such men were every day received and welcomed. His leisure hours were passed in examining and contemplating, with Lorenzo himself, his extensive cabinet of gems and medals; but his more serious studies were pursued with

[o] Michel Angelo was now between fifteen and sixteen years old, and remained with Lorenzo until his death, which took place about two years afterward. In the mean time there became a vacancy in the custom-house which could not be filled but by a citizen. Lodovico, the father of Michel Angelo, applied to Lorenzo for the appointment; Lorenzo said, smiling, and at the same time clapping him on his shoulder, 'You are destined to be a poor man; I thought you would have asked for something better worth your acceptance; but if you are willing to receive this until something better presents itself, it is at your service.' The office produced about eight crowns per month. *Condivi vita di Michel Angelo.*

diligence and ardour, and every day produced something to delight his patron. Among other places for improvement he frequented the Chapel of Massaccio, in the church of the Carmelites, where, Vasari says, he studied many months; and, according to Benvenuto Cellini, had the affray with Torrigiano, which will be mentioned hereafter.

Whilst Michel Angelo, according to the elegant historian of the House of Medici, was thus laying the sure foundation of his future fame, and giving daily proofs of his rapid improvement, he formed an intimacy with Politiano, who resided under the same roof, and who soon became warmly attached to his interests [p]. At his recommendation he exe-

[p] Among all the literary friends of Lorenzo, Angelo Politiano was the most particularly distinguished, he was born in the year 1454. He was indebted for his education to Piero, or rather to Lorenzo de' Medici, whom he always considered as his peculiar patron, and to whom he felt himself bound by every tie of gratitude. On his arrival at Florence he applied himself with great diligence to the study of the Latin and Greek languages, under Cristoforo Landino and Andronicus of Thessalonica. Facino and Argyrophylus were his instructors in the different systems of the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy; but poetry had irresistible allurements for his young mind, and his Stanzas on the Giostra of Giuliano, if they did not first recommend them to the notice of Lorenzo, certainly obtained his approbation and secured his favour. The friendship of Lorenzo provided for all his wants, and enabled him to prosecute his studies free from the embarrassments and interruption of pecuniary affairs. He was early enrolled among the citizens of Florence, and appointed secular prior of the college of St. Giovanni. He afterwards entered into clerical orders, and having obtained the degree of doctor of the civil law, was nominated a canon of the cathedral of Florence. Intrusted by Lorenzo with the education of his children, and the care of his extensive collection of manuscripts and antiquities, he constantly resided under his roof, and was his inseparable companion at those hours which were not devoted to the more important concerns of the state.

cuted a basso-relievo in marble, the subject of which was the battle of the Centaurs. This work yet ornaments the dwelling of his descendants; and, although not completely finished, displays great ability. But its highest commendation is, that it stood approved even in the riper judgment of Michel Angelo himself; who, although not indulgent to his own productions, did not hesitate on seeing it, even in the decline of life [q], to express his regret that he had not entirely devoted himself to sculpture.

The death of Lorenzo, which happened on the 8th of April 1492, deprived Michel Angelo of his patron and protector, and, with heavy affliction for his loss, he returned to his father's house. The first work that afterward occupied his attention was a statue of Hercules, which for many years was in the Strozzi palace, in Florence, and then sent

He had the reputation of being the best Greek scholar of his time, and in restoring the original purity of the antient authors he was indefatigable. He died at an early age, Sept. 24, 1494.

[q] The figures in this basso-relievo, according to Bottari, are about nine inches high, and Condivi, speaking of it, says, 'I remember hearing him (Michel Angelo) say, when I see it now, I repent not having entirely devoted myself to sculpture.'—*Che mi rammenta udirlo dire, che quando la vede, cognosce quanto torto egli abbia fatto alla natura, a non seguitar prontamente l'arte della scultura.* As this declaration was published ten years before the death of Michel Angelo, it must have been his opinion sixty years after the basso-relievo was executed. This work is still preserved in the house of one of his descendants in Florence, where there is also the head of a Madonna in basso-relievo, about two feet high, made, when he was also a young man, to counterfeit the hand of Donatello; and Vasari says that it might easily be taken for that master, except that it has more grace and is better drawn.

into France by Giovan Batista della Palla, and presented to Francis I.

Piero, the successor of Lorenzo, inherited his father's possessions, and as much of his rank as could be sustained by a worthless son. Although not without acquirements or capacity, yet his taste was corrupt and vitiated, and his manners overbearing and supercilious: his wealth and his power only served him to indulge in degrading follies, or trample on the distinctions that give worth and solidity to character. He considered the arts without any reference to genius or to intellect, and encouraged them only, during his short reign, to administer to his idle pleasures. Under the patronage of this man Michel Angelo was called upon to make a statue of Snow, to ornament the cortile of his palace; and had the apartments allotted to him that he occupied in the time of Lorenzo. He dined at the same table, and was considered with as much esteem as his new patron had feeling to bestow; the measure of which may indeed be tolerably well estimated by this exultation of Piero, that he had two extraordinary persons in his house: the one, Michel Angelo; the other, a Spanish running footman, who, besides being remarkable for the beauty of his person, was so rapid on foot and long breathed, that on horseback riding full speed he could not get before him[r].

[r] 'Mentre ch' egli tale statua faceva, essendo in Firenze venuta di molta neve, Pier de' Medici, figliuol maggiore di Lorenzo, che nel medesimo luogo del padre era restato,

Michel Angelo still pursued his studies, and among other occupations executed a crucifix in wood, rather less than nature, for the monastery of St. Spirito. The prior valued his abilities and cultivated his friendship; and to promote his knowledge in his profession, recommended him to the study of anatomy, and accommodated him with a room and subjects for dissection, of which he availed himself to acquire the first principles of that branch of Science.

The distracted state of Italy at this time, joined to the haughty and pusillanimous conduct of Piero de' Medici, divided the councils of Florence and disturbed its tranquillity; the impending storm awakened serious apprehensions in the mind of Michel Angelo, and he retired to Bologna to avoid its evils. In all ages calamitous events have been predicted by preternatural signs; and dreams, and omens have not been wanting to denote their near approach. Cla-

ma non nella medesima grazia; volendo, come giovane, far fare nel mezzo della sua corte una statua di neve, si ricordò di Michelagnolo: e fattolo cercare, gli fece far la statua: e volle, che in casa restasse, come al tempo del padre, dandogli la medesima stanza, e tenendolo di continuo alla sua mensa come prima: alla quale quella medesima usanza si teneva, che vivente il padre; cioè, che chi da principio a tavola sedesse, per nessuna persona, quantunque grande, che dappoi venisse, di luogo si movesse.'

' Lodovico padre di Michelagnolo, fatto già più amico al figliuolo, vedendolo praticar quasi sempre con uomini grandi, meglio e più orrevolmente l' addobbò di vestimenti. Così il giovane se ne stette con Piero alquanti mesi, e da lui fù molto accarezzato: il qual di due uomini della famiglia sua, come di persone rare, vantar si soleva, uno Michelagnolo, l' altro uno Staffiere Spagnuolo: il quale, oltre alla bellezza del corpo, ch' era maravigliosa, era tanto destro e gagliardo, e di tanta lena, che correndo Piero a cavallo a tutta briglia, non lo avanzava d' un dito.' *Condivi vita di Michel Angelo*, § xi, xii.

rendon has not thought it unworthy his immortal history to record the ghost story of Sir George Villiers, it may therefore interest the curious to compare a similar one, which predicted the overthrow of Piero de' Medici more than a century before that time, supported upon testimony not less credible or authentic.

" In the house of Piero was a man of the name of Cardiere, an improvisatorè of great ability, who, in the time of Lorenzo, sung improviso to the lyre in the evenings while he was at supper. Being a friend of Michel Angelo, he told him of a vision that disturbed his mind: Lorenzo de' Medici, he said, had appeared to him in a dream, with his body wrapped in a black tattered robe, and commanded him to tell his son, that shortly he would be driven from his house never again to return. Michel Angelo exhorted Cardiere to obey; but from his knowledge of Piero's disposition he was afraid, and kept it to himself. Another morning Michel Angelo being in the cortile of the palace observed Cardiere terrified and sorrowful: he then told him Lorenzo had again appeared to him that night in the same habit as before, and suddenly awoke him by a slap in the face, demanding the reason why he had not told Piero what he had before seen. Michel Angelo then reproved him for not having made the communication, and said so much that he took courage, and, with that view, set out on foot for Careggi, a villa belong-

ing to the Medici family, about three miles from Florence; but before he was quite half way he met Piero returning. He stopped him, and related what he had seen and heard. Piero laughed, and telling his attendants Cardiere's story, they made a thousand jokes at his expence; and his chancellor, who was afterward Cardinal di Bibbiena, said to him, *You are out of your mind. Whom do you think Lorenzo wills best, his son or you? If his son, would he not rather have appeared to him than to any other person, if it had been necessary to appear at all?* Cardiere, having thus discharged what he considered his duty, returned home, and so feelingly deplored the consequences, that Michel Angelo became persuaded the prediction would take place, and in a few days, with two companions, left Florence and went to Bologna. To whatever cause this prediction may be attributed, it so happened that it was verified; for the family de' Medici, with all the suite, were driven from Florence, and arrived at Bologna while Michel Angelo was there, and lodged in the house de' Rossi, and Piero himself never returned to Florence, but, after suffering a succession of mortifications, came to an untimely[*] death[†]."

[*] Pietro de' Medici succeeded to his father Lorenzo's situation in the republic, on the 8th of April, 1492. He was expelled from Florence, November 1494; and drowned in endeavouring to cross the river Garigliano in a boat, after an unsuccessful battle in the event of which he was interested, December 1503. *Vide Guicciardini*, lib. 6.

[†] *Condivi vita di Michel Angelo.*

Michel Angelo and his two companions had no sooner arrived in Bologna than they were taken into custody for the want of a proper passport. In the time of Bentivoglio a law was made to oblige every foreigner who entered Bologna to have his thumb-nail sealed with red wax; this regulation not having been attended to, they were conducted to the seal-office and fined fifty Bolognese lire, which being unable to pay, they were detained. Michel Angelo had hitherto paid for his companions, but as it now became necessary for him to consider the state of his finances, he began to repent of his expedition. M. Gianfrancesco Aldovrandi, a Bolognese gentleman, one of the sixteen constituting the government, being made acquainted with their embarrassment, set them at liberty; and as Michel Angelo was a man of genius, and known to him by reputation, invited him to his own house, which invitation he at first modestly declined, from having two companions whom he could not leave with propriety, nor intrude upon his benefactor's liberality. To this Aldovrandi humorously replied, 'Then I think I will go with you myself to see the world, as you take such good care of your friends.' He, however, at length persuaded him to accept his invitation, and Michel Angelo made a satisfactory apology to his companions, and gave them the money he had in his pocket to pursue the route to Venice.

During his stay at Bologna he received the most flattering

marks of attention from his hospitable friend, and by his order executed two statues in marble for the church of St. Domenico[u]. After remaining with him something more than a year, the affairs of Florence being tranquillized, he returned home.

Michel Angelo being again settled in his father's house, pursued his profession, and produced a statue of a sleeping Cupid, that advanced his reputation; and as, at this period, the discoveries of antiquity, which made a new æra in art and literature, were found sometimes to betray the judgment into too great an enthusiasm for those remains, it was suggested to him by a friend of his, one Pier Francesco, that if it could be supposed an antique, it would not fail to be equally admired. He adopted the thought, and stained the marble so as to give it the desired appearance, and his friend sent it to Rome, consigned to a proper person, to carry on the deception; who, after burying it in his vineyard, dug it up, and then reported the discovery. The de-

[u] These two statues were, a St. Petronio, and an Angel kneeling with a Candelabrum in the hand; the figures were three palms high (two feet three inches), and the money received for them thirty ducats; eighteen for the former, and twelve for the latter. This commission created an unpleasant jealousy between Michel Angelo and a Bolognese sculptor, who was much dissatisfied in not being employed, as the St. Petronio had been promised to him. During his stay in Bologna, his evenings were spent in reading Dante, Petrarca, and Boccaccio, to his friend, by whose kindness he was welcomed, and who particularly delighted in hearing him read those authors.

Condivi vita di Michel Angelo.

ception completely succeeded, and the statue was bought by Cardinal St. Giorgio for two hundred ducats; of which sum, however, Michel Angelo only received thirty.

The Cardinal had not been long in the possession of his new purchase, before he was given to understand that he was deceived; and that instead of its being an antique, it was the work of a modern artist in Florence. He felt indignant at the imposition, and immediately sent a gentleman of his household to Florence on purpose to learn the truth. No sooner was Michel Angelo discovered to be the sculptor, than the most flattering commendation was bestowed upon his merit, and he was strongly recommended to visit Rome, as the proper theatre for the exercise of his great talents: as an additional inducement, he was promised to be introduced into the Cardinal's service, and given to expect that he would recover the whole sum for which his statue had been sold. Michel Angelo felt these advantages, and without further hesitation returned with the gentleman to Rome. The person who sold the statue was arrested, and obliged to refund the money; but Michel Angelo was not benefited, nor was the Cardinal afterward sufficiently complaisant to reward him with encouragement who had been the means of mortifying his pride[x].

[x] The gentleman who was sent to Florence by the Cardinal to obtain the necessary information respecting the statue, visited the sculptors on a pretence of seeking for a person of that profession to execute certain works in Rome, and among others introduced himself to Michel Angelo, who having nothing to shew, took up a pen, and

Although Michel Angelo, during his stay in Rome, never received any commission from the Cardinal di St. Giorgio, yet his abilities were too much esteemed not to meet with encouragement: he was employed by a Roman gentleman of refined taste, of the name of Jacopo Galli, to make a statue of a Bacchus[y], and another of a Cupid. For Cardinal Rovano he also executed in marble a group of the Virgin, with a dead Christ in her lap, in Italy called a *Pietà*[z]. The

with such facility designed a hand, that the gentleman was astonished; and this led to a conversation respecting the statue which was the particular object of his visit. This hand is now among the drawings of the old masters in the gallery of the Louvre.

The statue of the Cupid, after it was returned by the Cardinal St. Giorgio, was in the possession of the Duke Valentino, who presented it to the Marchioness of Mantua, and by her it was deposited in the family palace in the city of Mantua: but where it is at present is not known.

y Of this statue there is a cast in Privy Gardens, at the house of the Duke of Richmond, brought into this country by that nobleman when he established his academy in the year 1758; and a copy of it in marble was made by the late Mr. Wilton for the Duke of Northumberland, and is now at Sion House. It is larger than nature, and the character and expression is youth feeling the excess of wine. The outline in the Appendix may serve to shew the attitude and general contour of the figure.

z This composition is felt with pathos and simplicity, and executed with the greatest care. It is now an altar-piece in St. Peter's, dedicated to *La Virgine Maria della Febbre.* In Michel Angelo's own time it was much celebrated, and several copies were made of it: one in marble, of the same size, by Nanni di Baccio Bigio, for an altar in the church dell' Anima, in Rome; and another by Gio. di Cecco Bigio, for an altar in the church of St. Spirito, in Florence. Michel Angelo also cast it twice in bronze: once for the altar of the Strozzi family in the church of St. Andrea della Valle, in Rome; and again for some Flemish merchants, to be sent to Flanders. For this cast Condivi says he had an hundred ducats. On a fillet which serves to connect the drapery with the figure, of which it makes a part, Michel Angelo has cut his name, which was not originally intended, but arose from the following circumstance, as related by Vasari. Michel An-

composition and execution of this group gave him a decided rank of precedence amongst his contemporaries. Besides these works, he made a cartoon of St. Francis receiving the *stigmata*, painted in distemper for St. Pietro in Montorio [a].

gelo one day entering the church observed a group of persons admiring the Pietà, and being foreigners (Lombards) they asked who was the sculptor, and one Cristoforo Solari, commonly called *Il Gobbo*, immediately answered, 'one of our countrymen, a Milanese.' Michel Angelo said nothing; but being vexed that his work should be attributed to another, shut himself up one night in the church, and by candle-light cut his name, that neither ignorance nor envy in future might rob him of his reputation.

Although this group was universally admired, yet by the critics this objection was made to it; that the Virgin appeared too young for the figure of the Christ. Condivi has given Michel Angelo's own reasoning on that remark, of which the following is a translation.—'Talking one day to Michel Angelo on that subject, he answered, *Don't you know that chaste women preserve their beauty and youthful character much longer than those who are not; how much more so then must be the immaculate Virgin, who cannot be supposed ever to have had a vitiated thought? and this is only according to the natural order of things; but why may we not suppose, in this particular case, that nature might be assisted by divine interposition, to demonstrate to the world the virginity and perpetual purity of the Mother? This was not necessary in the Son, nay rather the contrary, since Divine Omnipotence was willing to shew, that the Son of God would take upon him, as he did, the body of man, with all his earthly infirmities except that of sin; and therefore it was not necessary for me to make the human subordinate to the divine character, but to consider it in the ordinary course of nature under the actual existing circumstances. Hence you ought not to wonder, that from such a consideration I should make the most holy Virgin-mother of God, in comparison to the Son, much younger than would otherwise be required, and that I should have represented the Son at his proper age.*'

[a] Michel Angelo made this cartoon to oblige a person in the service of Cardinal St. Giorgio, who had no ability to make an original design for himself, but who had sufficient practice to paint from the designs of others. Vasari has not mentioned his name, but describes him in these words:—'In quel tempo un barbiere del Cardinale stato pittore, che coloriva a tempera molto diligentemente, ma non aveva disegno; fattosi amico Michel Angelo, gli fece un cartone d'un S. Francesco, che riceve le stimate, che fu con-

While he executed these commissions both with credit and profit to himself, he was also indefatigable by observation and study to improve and elevate his stile.

The republic of Florence, from the death of Lorenzo de' Medici, felt the instability of its government, and awake to the danger of contending factions, determined to make a perpetual Gonfaloniere [b], as the best means to secure the

dotto con i colori dal barbier in una tavoletta molto diligentemente, la qual pittura è oggi locata in una prima cappella entrando in chiesa a man manca di S. Piero a Montorio.'

[b] As the official terms of a foreign country may not be familiar to an English reader, a more correct knowledge of the quality of Gonfaloniere (literally standard-bearer) may perhaps be best derived from a slight sketch of the government of which it made a part. Florence often having been destroyed by the Ostrogoths, and restored by Charlemagne, remained long subject to his descendants and successors. Under the Guelphs and Ghibelines it suffered by the violence of contending parties, but the union of rival factions laid the foundation of its liberty. Twelve citizens, with the title of Anziani, or Ancients, were elected to preside over the government, whose office was annual; and two foreigners were appointed judges for the criminal and civil departments, one of whom had the title of 'Capitano di Popolo,' and the other that of 'Podestà.' Other judicious regulations were framed, by which Florence arrived at a high degree of power and credit. This constitution, however, was but of short duration. Manfredi, king of Naples, attacked the Florentines, conquered them, and in the public ruin every vestige of freedom disappeared. After Manfredi's death liberty revived, and the people again elected twelve magistrates, who went out of office every two months, with other regulations for the administration of public affairs; but the Pope, by his vicars and legates, swayed their councils and influenced their decrees. Such was the state of Florence till the year 1282, when the constitution underwent another form, and from among the magistrates were elected three persons, invested with superior powers, denominated 'Priori,' who also went out of office every two months. The number of these priori were afterwards increased to eight, and upon some extraordinary occasions to twelve. A palace was built for their reception, officers and guards appointed to distinguish and protect them, and they had the title of 'Signori,' or Lords.

little liberty the state knew how to enjoy; and Pietro Soderini, a man of the greatest prudence and moderation, was chosen by his fellow citizens to fill that office. Upon this event the friends of Michel Angelo advised him to leave Rome, knowing the disposition of that nobleman to encourage genius, and the high opinion he entertained of his abilities.

A large piece of marble had for many years been lying neglected in Florence, bosted out[c] for a gigantic statue, but with so little skill, that it was thought spoiled for any purpose of sculpture. This ill-shapen block Michel Angelo wished to convert into a statue, and the Gonfaloniere gave him permission to do the best he could with it. He then composed a figure accommodated to the irregular shape of the marble, and in eighteen months produced a

In every state where the lowest ranks of the community are intrusted with the civil offices, the nobles are apt to believe themselves above the laws; and the Florentine nobility were guilty of great excesses, and escaped punishment. To correct these abuses, an ordinance passed, declaring that every 'Signor,' on his entrance into office, should create a Gonfaloniere, who should enrol twenty companies of armed men, to preserve the public peace, and enforce a proper and impartial distribution of justice. The new employment soon became the most important in the state, and the Gonfaloniere was honoured with precedence over the rest of the magistrates. This is the origin of that office, which, although in its institution was only for two months, was found expedient to be made perpetual in the person of Soderini. *Opere de Machiavelli, lib. 2.*

[c] This term, in sculpture, corresponds to what is more familiarly understood by a sketch, in painting.

colossal statue of a David, which was placed in the Piazza, in front of the Palazzo Vechio, where it now stands [d].

When the statue was removed into this situation, Vasari tells an affected criticism of Soderini, which must remind every English reader of the story Pope has recorded of Lord Halifax, when he read to him the first books of his Iliad. 'The Gonfaloniere on seeing the statue admired it exceedingly, but pretended to discover that the nose was a little too large, which Michel Angelo endeavoured to explain, by attributing the appearance to the fore-shortening produced by the situation from which he saw it. This scientific reasoning, however, he perceived was not perfectly satisfactory; therefore, in an instant, he mounted the scaffold, taking in one hand a chisel, and a little marble dust in the other, and pretended to reduce the surface, letting the dust fall as he appeared to be working. Soderini was flattered with this deference to his judgment, and soon exclaimed, *Now I am better pleased; you have given it life.*' Whether this story be accurately true, or meant only to depreciate the taste and judgment of the Gonfaloniere, would not at this distance of time be easy to determine; but from the desire Soderini had to promote great undertakings, and

[d] The sum Michel Angelo received for this statue was four hundred ducats. The block of marble was nine braccia long (16 feet, 6 inches); and the statue is of the same height, as on the top of the head and the base the old surface of the marble remains.

to encourage great men, it would be fair to infer he possessed the true spirit of patronage, though he might want knowledge to judge with precision on the correctness of an outline.

By his order Michel Angelo also cast a figure in bronze of the size of nature, and a group of David and Goliath[e]; but that he might not entirely neglect the practice of painting, he painted a Holy Family for one Angelo Doni. This gentleman was a Florentine of taste and virtù, and a friend of Michel Angelo; but from the transaction which took place respecting this work, if Vasari be correct, his admiration for the artist's abilities was greater than his intimacy. When the picture was finished, it was sent home, with a note requesting the payment of seventy ducats; Angelo Doni did not expect such a charge, and told the messenger he would give forty, which he thought sufficient; Michel Angelo immediately sent back the servant, and demanded his picture, or an hundred ducats; Angelo Doni, not liking to part with it, returned the messenger agreeing to pay the original sum; but Michel Angelo, indignant at being haggled with, then doubled his first demand; and Angelo Doni still wishing to possess the picture, acceded, rather than try any further experiment to abate his price[f].

[e] Vasari says the single figure in bronze was a David, and sent to France. Condivi only mentions it as a statue, without giving it a name; it is not, however, at present to be found, neither is the group known.

[f] This picture is preserved in the Florence gallery, and is the only oil picture remain-

That Michel Angelo might have an opportunity of adding to his fame as a painter, the Gonfaloniere commissioned him to paint a large historical subject, to ornament the hall of the ducal palace; and, as it was the honourable ambition of Soderini to employ the talents of his country in the establishment of its fame, he engaged the abilities of Leonardo da Vinci, at the same time, to execute a corresponding picture to occupy the opposite side of the hall. An event in the war between the Florentines and the Pisans, was the subject Michel Angelo chose; and that of Leonardo da Vinci, a battle of Cavalry.

As the cartoon of Michel Angelo was the most extraordinary work which had appeared since the revival of the arts in Italy, and, as at this day perhaps no part of it remains, I shall transcribe Vasari's account and description of it. 'The Florentine soldiers, bathing in the river Arno in the heat of the weather, were alarmed by an unexpected assault from the enemy. The hurry and confusion in getting out of the water, dressing themselves, and preparing for action, was the point of time chosen, and the principal group in the cartoon was descriptive of that scene. Some of the figures were employed putting on their armour, buckling on the cuirass, and getting ready with precipitation to give as-

ing by Michel Angelo that can be authenticated. It has never been engraved, and for the composition introduced into this work, I am indebted to a friend who made the sketch from the original.

sistance to their companions; whilst an infinite body of cavalry fighting commenced the action. Among other figures was an old man seated on the ground, whose head was bound with a garland of ivy to shade his brows. In the tumult and confusion that surrounded him, he was represented drawing on a hose with difficulty, from the leg being wet; and with great muscular exertion and expression of countenance shewed both energy and impatience. The actions and attitudes of the figures were as contrasted as the circumstances might be supposed to create, and difficult foreshortenings characterized the deep knowledge of the artist and his powers of execution. The figures were variously sketched; some in charcoal, others in lines drawn with a pen, and some stumped with black chalk and the lights heightened with white, exhibiting at once great versatility and professional skill. Such was the excellence of this work, that some thought it absolute perfection; not to be rivalled, and hopeless to be approached. And certainly credit is due to the opinion, as from the time it was placed in the Papal Hall, to the honour of Michel Angelo and the glory of the art, it was for many years constantly visited by foreigners as well as natives, who, by studying a drawing from it, became eminent masters [g]."

g The names of those enumerated by Vasari who studied this cartoon were Aristotile da Sangallo, Ridolfo Ghirlandaïo, Raffaello Sanzio d'Urbino, Francesco Granacci, Baccio Bandinelli, Alonzo Berugetta Spagnuolo, Andrea del Sarto, Francia Bigio, Ja-

Michel Angelo was employed in making the cartoon when Julius II. was elected to the papal dignity, and from being invited by that pontiff to the Vatican, left it unfinished, contrary to the wish of Soderini. Afterward quitting Rome in disgust, he returned to Florence and completed the design; but succeeding events stayed the further prosecution of the undertaking, and the picture itself was never begun. The revolutionary changes which deprived the government of one of the best men that ever superintended the administration of public affairs, were equally unfavourable to the completion of public works, and from their consequences we have now to regret the loss of the cartoon itself.

When Soderini was forced from his situation, and the government of Florence reverted to the Medici family, the cartoon was removed from the senatorial council-chamber to the Medici palace, and put into a large room in an attic story, where students had free access for their improvement. From the ill state of health of the Duke Giuliano, and the worthlessness of his nephew Lorenzo, it was disregarded, and no care taken to prevent its being ill used; under these circumstances, some among the number of those who studied from it found it more practicable to obtain parts of the original, than imbibe any proportion of its merit; thus, by degrees, the cartoon was mutilated and ul-

copo Sansovino, il Rosso, Maturino, Lorenzetto, Tribolo when a child, Jacopo da Puntormo, and Pierin del Vaga.

timately destroyed. This irreparable injury to posterity is more particularly attributed to Baccio Bandinelli, who is said to have made use of a false key to let himself into the room privately, and, when alone, to tear it and carry away the pieces. For this unprincipled conduct various motives have been assigned; but as mischief is rarely uncompounded, an accurate knowledge of his character can alone determine what share his various passions had in this deformity of his mind; and as the action itself was base, it is but of little consequence to know, whether it was hatred, or envy, or selfishness, that produced it[h].

[h] Vasari, speaking of the destruction of this cartoon, says—'To the city the loss was great; but the heavy charge of envy and malignity on the character of Bandinelli, which was deservedly given to him by every one, was much greater.' The same author also informs us, that in his time there were pieces to be seen in the possession of individuals; and one person in particular, a gentleman in Mantua, of the name of Uberto Strozzi, had a fragment, which he preserved with the greatest care.

Among those who studied from it, Sebastiano da Sangallo was the only one who made a complete drawing of the principal group—'*Egli ritrasse in un cartonetto tutta insieme l'invenzione di quel gruppo di figure, la quale niuno di tanti, che vi avevano lavorato, aveva mai disegnato interamente.*' When the original was destroyed he held it as invaluable, and though he never suffered any one to make a copy of it, yet, by the persuasion of Vasari, in the year 1542, he painted a copy himself in Chiar'-oscuro for the King of France. Sebastiano da Sangallo's drawing is probably lost, neither have I been able to learn the destiny of the Chiar'-oscuro picture, unless that be it which is now in the possession of Mr. Coke, of Norfolk, and the only copy at present known; but as Mr. Bretingham, in his account of Holkham, informs us that it was purchased for the late Lord Leicester from the Barberini collection, some information is wanting to authenticate it to be the same picture painted for Francis I.

Three figures of this group were engraved by Marc' Antonio as early as the year 1510, and in 1524 another part of it, consisting of five figures, was engraved by Agostino Veneziano. The back-grounds of these prints cannot be considered as having made any part of the original cartoon, and were most probably added by the engravers.

The views of Julius II. were as distinguished for the encouragement of talents, as his ambition was impetuous and unbounded in the exercise of sovereign power. It was a favourite observation of his, that LEARNING elevated the lowest orders of society, stamped the highest value on nobility, and to princes was the most splendid gem in the diadem of sovereignty. He was no sooner seated on the throne than surrounded by men of genius, and Michel Angelo was among the first invited to his court[1]. After his arrival in Rome some time elapsed before any subject could be determined upon for the exercise of his abilities; at length the Pope gave him an unlimited commission to make a mausoleum, in which their mutual interests should be combined; though with unequal participation, for the sculptor rather makes the monument for himself, which is to record a name that will live longer in the page of history than the existence of his materials—he alone makes it for another, where a tablet is necessary to procrastinate the hour of oblivion.

[1] The Pope accompanied his invitation to Michel Angelo with an order for a hundred ducats to pay his expences to Rome. This statement is the same in Condivi and Vasari. Bottari, however, has mistaken one sum for another, and made Condivi give him a thousand ducats instead of a hundred for this purpose; and has ingeniously commented on the improbability of so large a sum being appropriated to that use, to set aside his testimony in an existing difference between him and Vasari in a fact immediately connected with that event. Padre della Valle, in his edition of Vasari, has copied the mistake in a note just as he found it, without examination. See Condivi, fol. § xxiii. and Bottari's ed. of Vasari, 4°. MDCCLX. vol. iii. p. 211.

Having received full powers, Michel Angelo commenced a design worthy of himself and his patron. The plan was a parallelogram, and the superstructure to consist of forty statues, many of which were to be colossal, interspersed with ornamental figures and bronze basso-relievos, besides the necessary architecture with appropriate decorations, to unite the composition into one stupendous whole.

When this magnificent design was completed, it met with the Pope's entire approbation, and Michel Angelo was desired to go into St. Peter's to see where it could be conveniently placed. At the west end of the church Nicolas V. had half a century before begun a new tribune, but the plan had not been continued by his successors; this situation Michel Angelo thought the most appropriate, and recommended it to the consideration of his Holiness. He inquired what expence would be necessary to complete it; to which Michel Angelo answered, 'A hundred thousand crowns.' 'It may be twice that sum,' replied the Pope; and immediately gave orders to Giuliano da Sangallo to consider of the best means to execute the work.

Sangallo, impressed with the importance and grandeur of Michel Angelo's design, suggested to the Pope that such a monument ought to have a chapel built on purpose for it, where situation and light-and-shadow might be so attended to, as to display every part to advantage; at the same time remarking, that St. Peter's was an old church, not at all

adapted for so superb a mausoleum, and any alteration would only serve to destroy the character of the building. The Pope listened to these observations, and to avail himself of them to their fullest extent, ordered several architects to make drawings for that purpose; but in considering and reconsidering the subject, he passed from one improvement to another, till he at length determined to rebuild St. Peter's itself[k]; and this is the origin of that edifice which took a hundred and fifty years to complete, and is now the grandest display of architectural splendour that ornaments the Christian world[l].

This monument, whose base was a parallelogram of thirty-four feet six inches by twenty-three, was to have been

[k] 'Nel ritorno di Giuliano in Roma si praticava, se'l divino Michel Angelo Buonarroti dovesse fare la sepoltura di Giulio; perchè Giuliano confortò il Papa all'impresa, aggiugnendo, che gli pareva, che per quello edifizio si dovesse fabbricare una cappella a posta, senza porre quella nel vecchio San Pietro, non vi essendo luogo, perciocchè quella capella renderebbe quell' opera più perfetta. Avendo dunque molti architetti fatti disegni, si venne in tanta considerazione a poco a poco, che in cambio di fare una capella, si mise mano alla gran fabbrica del nuovo San Pietro.' *Vasari vita di Giuliano da San Gallo.*

[l] To those who are curious in tracing the remote causes of great events to their source, Michel Angelo perhaps may be found, though very unexpectedly, to have thus laid the first stone of the reformation. His monument demanded a building of corresponding magnificence; to prosecute the undertaking money was wanting, and indulgences were sold to supply the deficiency of the treasury. A monk of Saxony opposed the authority of the church, and this singular fatality attended the event; that whilst the most splendid edifice which the world had ever seen was building for the Catholic faith, the religion to which it was consecrated was shaken to its foundation.

insulated, and to have had four façades surrounded with arched recesses containing statues, and, between them, terms supporting a projecting cornice. On pedestals before them were to have been statues representing the subjugated provinces the Pope had made obedient to the apostolic see; and others, personifying the virtues and liberal arts, denoting by their attitudes that by the death of Julius II. they also became prisoners of Death; no other prince being supposed likely to supply his place with the same fostering care and munificence. Above the cornice was to have been, at the angles, four colossal figures, personifying Moses and St. Paul, and Active and Contemplative Life [m]; and above them a frieze of basso-relievos in bronze, and smaller figures. To crown the whole, two statues representing heaven and earth were to support a sarcophagus: the former, expressing joy on Julius being received into a happier and a better world; the latter, sorrowful for his loss. Within the monument a sepulchral chamber, of an oval form, was to have contained the body of the Pope.

For this great work Michel Angelo was sent to Carrara, to procure a quantity of marble necessary for the undertaking, and the Pope gave him an order upon a banker in Florence for a thousand ducats to pay for it. That he might be sure of having such blocks as were best adapted

[m] From the collection of Mariette an original sketch for this mausoleum was published by Bottari; by which it would seem, that Michel Angelo once had an intention of placing two figures at each angle.

to his purpose, he took up his residence for eight months at the quarry, superintending and giving directions [n]. Part of the marble he ordered to be sent to Rome, and part to Florence, that he might execute some of the figures there, when the unwholesomeness of the summer season at the Vatican might subject him to the *malaria* [o]. He then returned to Rome, and immediately began to exercise his profession, and exhibit his talents as a sculptor.

The Pope had a personal attachment to him, and conversed with him upon every subject as well as sculpture, with familiarity and friendship; and that he might visit him frequently and with perfect convenience, caused a covered bridge to be made from the Vatican palace to his study, to enable him to pass at all times without being observed. This honourable partiality, however, was too apparent not to excite jealousy in those who were dependents on the court; and as jealousy seeks not to partake, but to monopolize favours, so he that has distinguished friends, can seldom be without secret

[n] While Michel Angelo was employing himself in superintending the workmen in the quarry, Condivi tells us, that one day being on the top of a mountain which overlooked the sea, it occurred to his mind to make a colossal figure which might serve as a mark for mariners to be seen at a distance; and would certainly have carried his intention into execution, the materials being at hand, if the Pope's monument had not been a work of too much importance to be delayed.

[o] Malaria is the cause of a disease common in the south of Italy, which is produced by an effluvia from damp and marshy ground acted upon by heat. Those who wish more particular information on this subject may consult the works of Lansesius and Sir John Pringle.

enemies. Michel Angelo had a high and a just sense of his acknowledged merit, and a constitutional irritability which felt the full value of kindness and attention, but was equally sensible of the slightest change; nor should this feeling be too hastily imputed to pride or irrascibility, since it requires but little experience to know, that when esteem begins to decline, all that is valuable in friendship is lost.

It was the constant practice of Michel Angelo, by the Pope's particular desire, whenever he had occasion for money, to apply to him in person, that he might not suffer inconvenience or delay. To defray certain expences incurred by the arrival of a quantity of marble from Carrara, he went to the palace as usual, but that access which had been heretofore almost unrestrained by form, was now embarrassed, and his Holiness was not to be seen. As this might have happened from engagements which it did not belong to him to investigate or inquire into, he only felt the disappointment, and retired. Another morning he repeated his visit, but was rudely interrupted by the person in waiting, who said, 'I have an order not to let you enter.' A prelate, standing by, immediately asked if he knew to whom he was speaking; to which the groom of the chamber replied, 'I know him well enough, and it is my duty to obey my orders.' Michel Angelo felt with indignation this unmerited disgrace, and in the warmth of resentment desired him to tell the Pope, 'from that time forward, if his Holiness should want him, he should have to seek him in

another place.' In the same temper of mind he returned home, and ordered his servants to sell the furniture in his house to the Jews, and follow him to Florence. Himself, the same evening, took post and arrived at Poggibonzi castle, in Tuscany, before he rested, being then completely out of the papal dominions.

His Holiness was no sooner informed of this hasty measure, than he dispatched five couriers with orders to conduct him back; but he was not overtaken until he was in a foreign state, where their authority was useless. They however delivered the Pope's letter to this import, 'Immediately return to Rome, on pain of our disgrace.' To this mandate the messengers joined their intreaties without effect; and as they had no power to enforce the commands of his Holiness, requested him to write an answer, and date it from Poggibonzi, to exempt them from blame in not having executed the commission with which they were intrusted. Although Michel Angelo obstinately refused to return, he readily complied with their request, and the letter is said to have been to this effect: That being expelled the antichamber of his Holiness, conscious of not meriting the disgrace, he had taken the only course left him to pursue, consistent with the preservation of that character which had rendered him worthy of his confidence. Neither would he return, for if he had been worthless to-day, he could be but of little value to-morrow, unless by the caprice of fortune, which would be neither creditable to his Holiness or himself. With a note to

this import, dated from Poggibonzi, he dismissed the couriers, and pursued his journey to Florence.

The Pope, however, was not satisfied with his answer, and immediately addressed the following letter to the government of Florence.

'Health and apostolic benediction to our dearly beloved Michel Angelo, who has left us capriciously, and without any reason we have been able to learn, is now in Florence, and remains there in fear of our displeasure, but against whom we have nothing to alledge, as we know the humour of men of his stamp. However, that he may lay aside all suspicion, we invite him with the same affection that you bear toward us; and, if he will return, promise, on our part, he shall be neither touched nor offended, and be reinstated in the same apostolic grace he enjoyed before he left us. Rome the 8th of July, 1506, III. year of our pontificate[p].'

This letter being rather of the nature of a request than a command, and Michel Angelo not feeling himself inclined to return, the Gonfaloniere thought that his Holiness

[p] Julius PP. II. Dilectis filiis Prioribus libertatis, et Vexillifero justitiæ populi Florentini.

Dilecti filii, salutem et apostolicam benedictionem. Michael Angelus sculptor, qui a nobis leviter et inconsulte discessit, redire, ut accepimus, ad nos timet, cui nos non succensemus; novimus hujusmodi hominum ingenia. Ut tamen omnem suspicionem deponat, devotionem vestram hortamur, velit ei nomine nostro promittere, quod si ad nos redierit, illæsus inviolatusque erit, et in eâ gratiâ apostolicâ nos habituros, quâ habebatur ante discessum.

Datum Romæ 8 Julii 1506. Pontificatus nostri III.

would give himself no further trouble, and the affair would be forgotten; but the sovereign pontiff, whose power had established dominion over the minds and sentiments of mankind, to which all Europe often submitted with implicit obedience, was not so easily disposed to yield up his authority, and this first letter was followed by a second and a third of a more decisive character. Soderini then told Michel Angelo, 'You have done by the Pope what the king of France would not have presumed to do; he must be no longer trifled with, and we cannot make war against his Holiness to risk the safety of the state, therefore his will must be obeyed.' Michel Angelo, finding himself thus embarrassed, recurred to a proposal made to him some time before, through the medium of certain friars of the order of St. Francis, to enter into the service of the Sultan to build a bridge between Constantinople and Pera. Soderini hearing of this project, sent for him to divert his intention. He urged that it was better to die under the Pope's displeasure, than to enjoy life with every earthly advantage in the service of the Turk; besides, it was not for him to fear any thing from his Holiness, whose sacred character was the dispenser of kindness and mercy; yet, if he were at all apprehensive for his security, the government of Florence would send him with the appointment of ambassador, which, by the law of nations, would be inviolate. On this condition Michel Angelo consented to return.

The ambition of foreign princes, and the discord of con-

tending parties which prevailed in the different forms of government in the northern states of Italy, gave opportunity to the enterprising talents of Julius II. to increase his temporal power. Bologna, which once had the form of a republic, by the fluctuating changes of revolution, governed at one time by a powerful citizen, and at another by a foreign prince, at length became subject to the Holy See; and, in the pontificate of Nicolas V. was added to the ecclesiastical state, under certain limitations, in favour of the Bentivoglio family: progressively, however, the power of the Popes declined, and Giovanni Bentivoglio established an absolute sovereignty in his own person. Julius II. by the aid of Louis XII. king of France, who, although obliged to abandon the south of Italy, was still in possession of Milan, determined once more to restore the city with its dependencies to the patrimony of St. Peter, and also to reduce the city of Perugia to obedience; or, in the language of the times, to free it from the tyranny of Gianpagolo Baglione; who, from a private citizen, became the head of a faction and trampled on its liberties.

As the reasons for the adoption of such measures as are most favourable to the wishes of men, are often given more with a view to divert, than inform the understanding, and contain more plausibility than truth; so Guicciardini asserts, that a powerful motive upon this occasion which induced the Pope to attack Bologna, was a private pique against Gio-

vanni Bentivoglio. In the reign of Alexander VI. he was instigated by that pontiff to give orders for the arrest and imprisonment of the Cardinal della Rovere, whilst residing in his bishopric at Cento, in the Bolognese territory, from which he only escaped by a timely and precipitate retreat; and, according to that celebrated historian, the zeal and piety of Julius to restore to the Apostolic See whatever had been tyrannically taken from it, was only a cloak for his ambition or personal animosity. Be this as it may, on the 26th of August 1506, he left Rome to atchieve his enterprise, placing himself at the head of the army, and accompanied by twenty-four cardinals. When he arrived at Orvieto, Baglioni found it most prudent courteously to yield to the authority which it would have been ruinous to resist, and introduced himself to the Pope, at once to resign his power and offer him his services. The preliminaries, which were short, and as favourable as might have been expected, put his Holiness into immediate possession of Perugia; where, after making some necessary arrangements for its security, he continued his march to Imola. Here the Pope summoned Bentivoglio to resign his authority; but he had calculated upon resources sufficiently important to make his resistance formidable, and felt no disposition to follow the example of Baglioni. A body of three[q] thousand infantry, and six hundred horse, marched from Milan under the command of

[q] Guicciardini Storia d'Italia, lib. vii.

Sciomonte, nominally to protect the government of Bentivoglio, and oppose the invading enemy; but Louis XII. had preconcerted how his interest might be better served by attaching himself to the sovereign of the church, than to the precarious power of the chief magistrate of Bologna; and as, in his treacherous conspiracy with Ferdinand of Arragon, he had given sufficient proof of how little value he considered the obligations which are essential to the BEING of society in common life; so, upon this occasion, the troops which were given to Bentivoglio for his defence, by a secret treaty were devoted to the service of Julius. Under these circumstances all prospect of resistance was hopeless, and with little choice what line of conduct to pursue, he privately quitted Bologna with his family, and retired into the Milanese. The city being left to itself, no difficulties remained to give his holiness complete possession, and on St. Martin's day (Nov. 11) he made his entry with great pomp.

Being now at Bologna enjoying the advantages of his enterprise, and at peace with the inhabitants, the Gonfaloniere considered it a favourable opportunity for Michel Angelo to make his peace also with the Pope, and his brother the Cardinal Soderini was willing to undertake the mediation. Michel Angelo acceded to the proposition, and immediately went to Bologna to avail himself of its probable advantages. When he arrived, the Cardinal was unfortunately indisposed, and he deputed a Monsignore of his household to officiate in his stead, and introduce him to his Holiness, who was

then residing in the government palace. As Michel Angelo entered the presence-chamber the Pope gave him an askance look of displeasure, and after a short pause saluted him, "In the stead of your coming to us, you seem to have expected that we should wait upon you." Michel Angelo replied with submission, that his error arose from too hastily feeling a disgrace that he was unconscious of meriting, and hoped his Holiness would pardon what was past. The Monsignore[r] standing by, not thinking this a sufficient apology, endeavoured to extenuate his conduct, by saying that great allowance was to be made for such men who were ignorant of every thing but their art; on which the Pope hastily replied, with warmth, "Thou hast vilified him which I have not, thou art an ignorant fellow and no man of genius, get out of my sight;" and one of the attendants immediately pushed him out of the room. The Pope then gave Michel Angelo his benediction, and restored him to his friendship; and before he withdrew desired him not to quit Bologna till he had given him a commission for some work of art. In a few days he ordered a colossal statue of himself to be made in bronze.

During the Pope's stay Michel Angelo employed himself in making the model, enjoyed his friendship, and was honoured as formerly with his frequent visits. The air and attitude of the statue is said to have been grand, austere, and

[r] Vasari calls this dignitary a Bishop (il Vescovo), but I have preferred the appellation of Monsignore, on the authority of Condivi.

majestic; in one of the visits he received from his Holiness, the Pope, making his observations and remarks with his accustomed familiarity, asked if the extended right arm was bestowing a blessing or a curse on the people? "La benedizione o la maledizione?" To which Michel Angelo replied, The action is only meant to be hostile to disobedience; and then asked his Holiness whether he would not have a book put into the other hand? To which the Pope facetiously replied, "No, a sword would be more adapted to my character, I am no book-man."

His Holiness left Bologna at the end of February 1507, intrusting the government of the city to Cardinal Regino. Michel Angelo remained to finish the statue, which he terminated in sixteen months, and placed it in the façade of the church of St. Petronio; and at the end of June 1508, returned to Rome.

The thirst of power, with little attention to the means by which it was acquired or maintained, sullied and degraded the most conspicuous characters which are exhibited in the history of these times. The Venetians being more prudent and prosperous, and more united in their councils, were feared or hated by all the powers in Europe, and the celebrated league of Cambray was for no other purpose than to make a partition of their territory, and reduce their government to ruin and dissolution; but heterogeneous bodies seldom unite to accomplish any one great end; inequality of power, of interest, or ability, have a constant tendency to detach

the parts of which it is composed. To retain the possession of Bologna, and to add Romagna to the dominion of the church, induced Julius II. to enter into this confederacy. When this object was obtained he withdrew from the league, and changed his politics as seemed best adapted to secure his possessions; but he miscalculated his strength, and Bologna, which by the assistance of Louis XII. was made subject to the Holy See in 1506, was retaken by his arms in 1511, and the Bentivoglio family restored to their influence and authority.

Upon this event the Pope became a fit object for popular clamour to insult, and for the extravagance of faction to mark its own disgrace by pusillanimous resentment. His bronze statue was therefore thrown down, dragged about the streets, broken to pieces, and destroyed. The mutilated fragments were afterwards sent to the Duke of Ferrara, who cast them into a piece of ordnance, to which he gave the name of Giulio, except the head, which being entire, he preserved in his museum[t]. Muratori says, this statue was set up at the expence of five thousand ducats, and gave rise to the following satirical lines of Piero Valeriano.

[t] The loss of this statue is greatly to be regretted; it is described to have been nearly ten feet high (five braccia), and was destroyed on the 30th of December, 1511. I have never seen any print or representation of it. The head, which was preserved entire, the Duke of Ferrara is said to have put an inestimable value upon; which is an honourable testimony of his virtù, as it was not possible he could have had any affection for the person whom it was meant to represent. After the death of Alfonzo what became of this fragment is not known.

Quo quo tam trepidus fugis Viator;
Ac si te Furiæve, Gorgonesve,
Aut acer Basiliscus insequantur?
—Non hic JULIUS—at figura JULII est!

On the arrival of Michel Angelo at Rome he expected to have proceeded with the monument which he had left, but the Pope had changed his mind, and now determined, instead of prosecuting that work, to decorate with pictures the ceiling and walls of the Sistine Chapel, to honour the memory of his uncle Sixtus IV. This was no sooner proposed to Michel Angelo than he felt the disappointment, and made every possible objection to engage in the undertaking, being solicitous to execute his great work of sculpture, and fearful to hazard his reputation on a new employment, where his want of practice and experience necessarily diminished his hope of success. Among other arguments, he urged that fresco painting was not his profession, and recommended his Holiness to give the commission to Raffaello, in whose hands it would do honour to them both. The Pope, however, was predetermined, and his determinations were not easily set aside, so that each objection seemed only to be an additional incentive more firmly to fix his will; perceiving, therefore, that it was useless to contend, he prudently yielded to his authority.

The causes which operated to induce the Pope to abandon or suspend the execution of his monument have not been sa-

tisfactorily given. Bramante is particularly charged with having used his influence with the Pope, during Michel Angelo's absence in Bologna, to divert his attention from prosecuting the design. The known partiality of Julius to works of sculpture in preference to painting and architecture, is said to have excited the jealousy of Bramante, lest Michel Angelo might have too great an ascendency in the Vatican, so as to interfere with his own reputation, and the confidence which was reposed in him as the architect of St. Peter's; but a still more plausible ground is said to have influenced his mind, the success of Raffaello, who was his relation, and but recently introduced to court. Another reason is also given more subtle in its plan and indirect in its application.—As Michel Angelo was known never to have painted a single figure in fresco, the employing him in so great a work to which he must have been reasonably supposed inadequate, would be a mean of striking at his high reputation, and his want of success a foil to give additional lustre to the works which Raffaello was then painting in the Vatican[u].

If the wilds of detraction were not as various as the imagination, such an opinion could never have been credited: that Bramante was not on terms of friendship with Michel Angelo, there is every reason to believe; but as a portrait of an enemy is never the portrait of the man, con-

[u] Vide Vasari vita di Michel Angelo, tom. iii. p. 219. Condivi, sec. xxxiii.

siderable abatement must be made for party prejudice and the irritation of wounded feelings. Whatever were the causes of this new arrangement, they are buried in oblivion, and it would be now hopeless to inquire, whether they ought to be attributed to individual caprice, or the machinations of those who wished to injure the sculptor in the esteem of his patron.

The Sistine Chapel was built by Sixtus IV. and the walls ornamented with historical paintings by various masters. These pictures were to be effaced, and the entire chapel to be painted by Michel Angelo, so as to correspond in its parts, and make one uniform whole*.

It being now decided that he must make an attempt to execute this great undertaking, he commenced the Cartoons, and the architect of St. Peter's had orders to construct a scaffolding for the work to be painted in fresco. When the scaffolding was finished he found it extremely objectionable, and in particular from certain holes pierced in the ceilingfor cords to pass through to suspend part of the machinery. He asked the architect how the ceiling could be completed if they were suffered to remain? To which he answered, It was impossible to avoid making them, and the remedy must be a subsequent consideration. This created a dispute, and

* The pictures that ornamented the chapel were painted by Luca Signorelli, Pietro Perugino, Sandro Botticelli, Cosimo Roselli, and Domenico Ghirlandaio, and still remain to decorate the walls of the Sistine Chapel, as the death of Julius prevented the completion of the original design.

Michel Angelo represented it to the Pope as a defect which might have been avoided, if he had better understood the principles of mechanism. His Holiness therefore gave him permission to take it down, and erect another in its stead. He then designed and constructed one so complete, that Bramante afterwards adopted it in the building of St. Peter's, and is most probably that simple and admirable piece of machinery now used in Rome whenever there is occasion for scaffolding to repair or construct the interior of public buildings. This invention Michel Angelo gave to the poor man whom he employed as his carpenter, and, from the commissions he received for making others on the same construction, he realized a small fortune [y].

Michel Angelo never having painted in fresco, when the Cartoons were finished, he sent to Florence and engaged such persons as were experienced in that branch of the art; but, from the first specimen of their abilities, their efforts proved so little satisfactory, he determined himself to try how far he could overcome the difficulties which made it necessary for him to seek their aid. Without giving them any previous notice, he locked himself in the chapel, de-

[y] By his gains, Condivi says, he was enabled to give marriage portions with his daughters. "Disfece Michel Angelo il ponte e ne cavò tanti canapi, che avendogli donati a un pover uomo, che l'aiutò, fu cagione, ch' egli ne maritasse due sue figliuole. Così fece senza corde il suo, così ben tessuto e composto, che sempre era più fermo quanto maggior peso aveva."

stroyed their work, and commenced painting, nor suffered any one either to assist or interrupt him[z].

As in the execution of great works all the circumstances connected with their progress are interesting, it may gratify curiosity to know that the subject of the Deluge on the ceiling was the picture on which he first made trial of his powers in fresco painting. This picture was no sooner finished than it seemed obscured by a mist, which so disconcerted Michel Angelo, that he went to the Pope and desired he might be suffered entirely to relinquish the undertaking; as to contend with embarrassments he saw no means of removing, would not only render his exertion useless, but produce mutual dissatisfaction and disappointment. His Holiness, who was determined not to be foiled in his original design, attended to every objection with wary suspicion; he therefore ordered San Gallo, who was in his confidence and esteem, to investigate the causes of the defect, and make his report. San Gallo was a skilful architect, of many accomplishments, and well versed in various branches of knowledge. When he saw the picture, he explained the defect to arise from the plaster being used too wet, and a saline exudation from the materials of which it was composed.

[z] "Ma veduto le fatiche loro molto lontane dal desiderio suo, e non sodisfacendogli, una mattina si risolvè gettare a terra ogni cosa che avevano fatto; e rinchiusosi nella cappella, non volle mai aprir loro; ne manco in casa dov' era da essi si lasciò vedere; e così dalla beffa, la quale pareva loro che troppo durasse, presero partito e con vergogna se ne tornarono a Fiorenza." Vasari, tom. iii. p. 221.

This being satisfactorily proved, means were adopted to prevent any similar recurrence: and the difficulty being now overcome, Michel Angelo proceeded, and none other of any importance connected with his own inexperience prevented or impeded his progress.

As the work advanced, the Pope frequently visited him in the chapel, and ascended the ladder to the top of the scaffolding, where Michel Angelo was used to lend him his hand that he might get with safety on the platform. Notwithstanding this daily opportunity of indulging an eager curiosity, his Holiness grew impatient to see the general effect as far as it was advanced; and, to pacify the natural impetuosity of his temper, all the machinery was removed before half the ceiling was completed. To those who know the danger of gratifying the curiosity of a patron in a premature display of his works, this must be regarded as a hazardous experiment; fortunately, however, the exhibition was attended with no disappointment. The Pope was perfectly satisfied, and all men of taste and virtù so eagerly pressed forward to avail themselves of the opportunity, that they crowded into the chapel before the dust, occasioned by the taking down of the scaffolding, had subsided.

The rivals and enemies of Michel Angelo, if any there were, who hoped to see his genius reduced to a level with their own, were now disappointed; nevertheless the architect of St. Peter's was accused of unworthily condescending to use his influence to circumscribe his fame, by secretly soliciting

the Pope to permit Raffaello to paint the other half of the ceiling, that he might share the honour of the undertaking. Of this surreptitious proceeding Michel Angelo had immediate intimation, and appealed to the Pope in the presence of Bramante himself, to justify his claim to the completion of a work which he had so successfully begun. The Pope, however, was so perfectly satisfied with that part of the chapel already executed, that he was not to be swayed by any undue influence, and with the most satisfactory assurances of his esteem and confidence, desired him to proceed without a partner and without interruption.

After the curiosity of Rome was satisfied, Michel Angelo resumed his work, and with the most persevering assiduity continued till it was finished. The ceiling which is coved he ornamented with architectural decorations painted in chiar'-oscuro, and separated into numerous divisions. The flat space at the top he divided into nine compartments, each containing a subject from the Old Testament, in the following order. The Deity dividing the light from the darkness, which may be considered the first in the order of succession; the second picture represents a personification of the Deity, with extended arms, creating the Sun and Moon, and in the same compartment creating and fructifying the earth; in the third space the Deity is intended to be looking down upon the waters, commanding them to be a habitable deep; the fourth is the creation of Adam, in which the om-

nipotent power is surrounded by angels, extending his right arm as if imparting the vital principle to the created form; the fifth is the creation of Eve; the sixth, the loss of Paradise; the seventh, the sacrifice by Cain and Abel; the eighth, the deluge; and the ninth represents the inebriation and exposure of Noah. Beneath the chiar'-oscuro entablature, which divides the coved from the flat part of the ceiling, are arranged forty-eight infantine figures, standing two and two on pedestals, in diversified attitudes, supporting the cornice as cariatides; and between them are seated twelve colossal figures of Prophets and Sybils, alternately arranged. Over the windows, in compartments called lunettes, are fourteen compositions, and an equal number of tablets, inscribed with names indicating the genealogy of Christ; and in triangular spaces produced by the thickness of the wall immediately over the lunettes, are introduced eight compositions of domestic subjects. In the angles at the four extreme corners of the ceiling are represented the miracle of the brazen serpent, the execution of Haman, the death of Goliah, and the treachery of Judith. Besides these various compositions, are ten medallions with historical subjects, and more than fifty single figures disposed of as ornamental accompaniments to the general design. As the most elaborate and minute description of this comprehensive work would only puzzle the mind and make but a vague and uncertain impression, I have preferred annexing a sketch of the whole ceiling, with the compositions and their

arrangement, as the more satisfactory way of making it better understood by those who have not been fortunate enough to see the chapel itself.

From the commencement to the conclusion of this stupendous monument of human genius twenty months were only employed. So short a time for the completion of so vast a work could hardly be credited, if it were not more difficult to refuse the testimony on which it is supported than to doubt the fact. Nevertheless the Pope harassed its progress with impatience, for he was an old man; and as his designs, of whatever nature they might be, were always planned with the enthusiasm of youth, so they were hastened with a consciousness of his having no time to lose. To comply, therefore, with the eager desire of his patron, Michel Angelo removed the scaffolding before he had put the last finish to his work; and on All Saints' day, in the year 1512, the chapel was opened, and the Pope officiated at high mass to a crowded and admiring audience.

After this solemnity and curiosity was gratified, the Pope was willing Michel Angelo should retouch the pictures where he wished them to be improved; but, on considering the inconvenience of re-erecting the scaffolding, he declined doing any thing more, and said that what was wanting was not of material importance; on which the Pope observed, they ought to be ornamented with gold, to give a characteristic splendour to the chapel; to this Michel Angelo replied, "In those days gold was not worn, and the characters I have

painted were neither rich nor desirous of wealth, but holy men, with whom gold was an object of contempt." The repartee was happy, and with respect to his own works he felt the importance of that truth, better known in an age more characterised by simplicity than luxury, that the mind, and not the material, is the true basis on which future fame depends [a].

The ceiling being finished, he applied himself to make designs and studies for other pictures for the sides of the chapel, to complete the original plan; but, on the 21st of February, 1513, the Pope died, and to Michel Angelo his loss was not supplied.

The talents of JULIUS II. have been usually balanced against the violence of his temper, and want of due decorum in his apostolical character, so as to leave nothing to envy or commend; yet it is acknowledged, had he been a temporal prince the most distinguished honours would not have been denied him [b]. He had courage enough to rank with

[a] The original sum Michel Angelo was to have had for painting the whole chapel was fifteen thousand ducats, but for the ceiling he only received three thousand.

[b] *Vide Guicciardini, lib.* xl. "Francis I. also gave an honourable testimony to the skill and courage of Julius as a soldier, in a declaration he made to Leo X. to extenuate his having borne arms against the head of the church in the reign of his predecessor."—"Pater Sancte, non miremini si omnes sunt inimici Papæ Julii, quia ipse etiam fuit maximus inimicus noster, et non cognovimus nostro sæculo teribiliorem hostem in bellis quam Papam Julium, qui in veritate fuit prudentissimus Capitaneus, et melius fuisset imperator exercitus, quam Papa Romanus." Paris de Grassis has recorded this declaration, which took place at one of the public interviews of Leo X. and Francis I. at Bologna, where he was present as master of the ceremonies to the Pope.

the brave[c], and views sufficiently comprehensive to satiate ambition; but the milder virtues, subject to moderation, he either found inadequate to his purpose, or did not feel their worth. He was by nature fitted for sovereignty, but knew not how to increase the Patrimony of St. Peter by treading in his steps. To be a good man, is all that the good desire of others; but to be great, is what each desires for himself; unfortunately in the political economy of states, to combine these qualities is difficult, and often impossible, since men, by common consent, separate virtue from talents, and bestow the highest praise on triumphant power, whatever be its aim or end. He encouraged and protected genius, not from ostentation, but a desire to elevate human nature above its common standard; and though involved in war and political contest during the whole of his short reign, sufficient evidence remains of his fostering care, and as long as the works of Bramante, Raffaello, and Michel Angelo, partake of the admiration of mankind, JULIUS II. will have a just claim to gratitude and esteem.

A short time before his death, he desired that his monument might be finished, and left it to the care of

[c] At the siege of Mirandola (21 Jan. 1511) Julius, at the head of his troops, fearlessly exposing himself to the fire of the enemy in planning the order of attack, and present in every important situation of danger, before the town could formally capitulate, mounted the scaling ladder, and entered it sword in hand through the breach he had made. *Muratori Annal d'Italia.*

Cardinal Santi Quattro, and to his nephew Cardinal Aginense. After his death, however, the cardinal nephew calculated the expence, and his arithmetic was conclusive: the original design of the mausoleum was therefore laid aside, and Michel Angelo received instructions to make another, on a limited scale and at a stipulated price.

Sensible of the loss he had sustained, and warm with the feelings of gratitude and friendship, he eagerly commenced his new undertaking, and employed such assistance as could forward its progress, hoping to have no interruption; but Leo X. who succeeded to the pontificate, disturbed his plan. This magnificent potentate, whose reign makes an æra in the intellectual acquirements of modern times, upon his accession to the papal throne, professed the same warmth of attachment, and the same zeal to promote the talents of Michel Angelo as his predecessor. That his abilities might be employed to the honour of his native city, Leo wished him to return to Florence to build the façade of the church of S. Lorenzo, which remained unfinished from the time of his grand-father Cosmo de' Medici. The stipulation Michel Angelo had made with the cardinals to execute the monument of his patron Julius II. he stated to the Pope as an engagement which it was not in his power either to rescind or procrastinate, and therefore hoped to be excused from undertaking a commission which would necessarily interfere with it. He had so earnest a desire to devote all his attention to

this work, that he was happy in having so good a reason to prevent his being diverted from it; but reason, which may be conclusive between individuals under the same circumstances, is seldom of equal importance when there is not the same necessity to abide by its determination: hence the cardinals were requested to suspend their claims, which it was not for them to refuse, and Michel Angelo obliged, though reluctantly, to obey the will of the Sovereign Pontiff[d].

As soon as he arrived in Florence he made his arrangements for executing the façade, and went to Carrara to order the marble which might be necessary, and also such as he should want, for the monument of Julius, that in Florence no part of his time might be unemployed. At this period the Pope received information that good marble was to be obtained in the mountains of Pietra Santa[e], in the Florentine state, equal in quality to that of the quarries of Carrara; and while Michel Angelo was there, he received a letter from his Holiness desiring that he would go to Pietra Santa and examine how far this information was correct. He obeyed his orders, and in a short time after sent him the result of

[d] As some consolation to the Cardinals, the Pope told them that Michel Angelo might forward the monument at Florence; but to the parties this indulgence afforded little satisfaction, and still less to Michel Angelo. "Che tutto fu con dispiacere de' Cardinali e di Michelagnolo, che si partì piangendo." *Vasari*, tom. iii. p. 232.

[e] Pietra Santa was the name of a castle, which gave this distinctive appellation to the mountains in its neighbourhood.

his investigation, which did not prove so favourable as had been represented to his Holiness. The marble was more difficult to work, and of inferior quality; added to which, there was no practical means of conveying it to Florence, without making a road of many miles to the sea through mountains, to be cut at a considerable expence, and over marshes which would require to be traversed with fasçines and rafts to make them passable. These objections, however, made but a slight impression on the Pope's mind, comparing them with the advantages which might result from obtaining so valuable a material for building in a territory which he could at any time call his own; Michel Angelo was therefore desired to proceed, and it is a mortifying reflection, that the talents of this great man should have been buried in these mountains, and his time consumed during the whole reign of Leo X. in little other than raising stone out of a quarry, and making a road to convey it to the sea.

As the reign of Leo X.[f] is an entire blank in the life of Michel Angelo, it may not be irrelevant to the present subject to consider the taste and patronage of that illustrious branch of the house of Medici, which is supposed so materially to have contributed to the splendour of his pontificate. The golden days of Leo have long been a dictum in Europe.

[f] Leo X. was elected to the pontificate on the 11th of March 1513, and died on the 1st of Dec. 1521, having reigned eight years, eight months, and nineteen days.

His claims to the bright æra in which he lived have been variously estimated: by some it has been asserted, that he only contributed his share to the advancement of intellect; whilst by others he has been represented as the sole cause of the literature and refinement of his age. Eight years and as many months must be confessed to be a very limited duration for all the fame that has been conceded to him:—genius may be fostered and protected whenever it appears, industry rewarded, and institutions established for the promotion of knowledge, but knowledge itself is of too slow a growth to be matured from any germs in so short a time; nevertheless, in the splendour of his reign, all progression is lost sight of, and we are dazzled with rays concentrated in himself, and dispensing their influence to all around; no comment, however, is necessary to shew that grandeur and power, when only employed with ordinary discretion, have ever had an ascendency over the opinions of mankind. A little good done by him who can do much harm, is usually magnified by our hopes and fears; and the smiles of those who can frown to our destruction, have always been regarded with peculiar satisfaction and recorded with delight. To this charm much of the praise of Leo is to be attributed, which dignified, in prose and verse, events that would have conferred no distinction on the obscurity of private life[s].

s Vide *Antiquaria*, a Latin poem by Andrea Fulvius, in two books, which M. Fabroni, in his life of Leo X. has made us acquainted with. Mr. Roscoe has also given a Latin poem by Valeriano, praising Leo with hyperbole, and auguring his future glory,

When Leo ascended the papal throne, the arts in Rome were at their meridian; he found greater talents than he employed, and greater works commenced than he completed. Those men who have been for succeeding ages the

for having cleared away some brambles on an island in the Tiber, exposing the remains of its original fortification, constructed in the form of a Roman galley. When speaking on this subject, the elegant historian of the House of Medici has been led into a slight mistake, by supposing the discovery of this galley to be a piece of sculpture dug up in the island; the whole island having been made in its fortification to represent the vessel that was sent to Greece to implore the protection of Æsculapius in the destructive plague of 462, A. U. C. and from the succeeding fable, which is well known, the island itself was dedicated to that deity. On the side of this galley were, most probably, sculptured some emblematical devices, as that part which remains, and was discovered by the Cardinal de' Medici, has, in high relief, an Æsculapian rod and a bull's head, and may be now seen from a boat in the middle of the stream which separates the island from the left bank of the river.

Leo X. also placed a porphiry sarcophagus, now containing the remains of Clement XII. in the church of S. Giovanni in Laterano, under the portico of the Pantheon, which is commemorated by the following inscription:

LEO X. PONT. MAX. PROVIDENTISS. PRINCEPS
VAS ELEGANTISSIMUM EX LAPIDE NUMIDICO
NE POLLUTUM NEGLIGENTIÆ SORDIBUS
OBOLESCERET IN HUNC MODUM REPONI
EXORNARIQUE JUSSIT.

Upon his elevation to the pontificate he removed the group of the Laocoon to the Vatican, and in exchange for the annuity conferred upon the person who discovered it, he gave him the appointment of apostolic notary. "Thus," says his accomplished biographer, "the encouragement afforded to those who devoted themselves to these inquiries gave new vigour to their researches. The production of a genuine specimen of antiquity secured to the fortunate possessor a competency for life, and the acquisition of a fine statue was almost equivalent to a bishopric."

The group of the Laocoon was discovered in the year 1508, in a recess in the ruins of the Baths of Titus, where most probably it stood in the time of Pliny, who has de-

admiration of mankind, Leonardo da Vinci, Michel Angelo, and Raffaello, performed their greatest works, on which their immortality has found a permanent basis, before the accession of Leo X.; and Bramante, the architect of St. Peter's, died in the second year of his pontificate. Leonardo da Vinci and Michel Angelo are acknowledged not to have felt the influence of his favours; and for the magnificence of the state-chambers in the Vatican, posterity is

scribed it to be there in the reign of that emperor. The name of the discoverer was one Felice de Fredis, and this inscription on his tomb perpetuates his claim to our obligation.

'Felici de Fredis,
'Qui ob proprias virtutes,
'Et repertum LAOCOONTIS divinum quod
'In Vaticano cernes ferè
'Respirans simulacrum,
'Immortalitatem meruit,
'Anno Domini MDXXVIII.'

For this discovery Julius granted to Felice de' Fredis the tolls, duties, and customs, which were received at the gate of S. Giovanni in Laterano; but as these duties would seem previously to have belonged to the church of S. Giovanni, Leo restored them to the church, of which it is to be remarked he was in a peculiar manner the head, as Bishop of Rome, and in lieu of them he conferred upon Fredis the office of apostolic notary; but as this commutation appears to me to merit no particular encomium, I will give the original words, as related by Winckelman in his *Storia delle arti*, lest I may have been mistaken in their import. "Ho trovato in una relazione manoscritta, degna di fede, che papa Giulio II. diede a Felice de' Fredis, e a suoi figliuoli introitum et portionem gabellæ Porta S. Johannis Lateranensis, in premio d'avere scoperto il Laocoonte; e che Leon X. restituendo queste rendite alla chiesa de S. Giov. Laterano, assegnò loro in vece Officium Scriptoriæ Apostolicæ, con un breve in data dei Novembre, 1517."

indebted to the pontificate of Julius II. The two rooms painted by Raffaello himself, on which, as a painter, his reputation most depends, were nearly completed in that reign[h].

Nevertheless Leo X. derives his strongest claims as a patron of art from his attachment to Raffaello; and an author of high reputation of our own times[i] has said, that under his patronage the works commenced in the chambers of the Vatican proceeded with increased ardour; I should be happy to concur in the same opinion, but all the facts I am acquainted with lead me to a different conclusion. The first room under Julius II. was begun in the year 1508, and finished in 1511; the second was completed in 1514; and the third, consisting of only four pictures painted by his scholars, took up an equal time; which, when compared with either of the former apartments, must have cost Raffaello but little of his own assiduity, it being very evident,

[h] The first room was finished in the year 1511, and the second was completed in 1514. Of the pictures in this room Raffaello had painted the Miracle of Bolsena and the Heliodorus, and appears to have been painting the subject of the Retreat of Attila when Julius died, which may be ascertained from this circumstance. In the picture, the portrait of Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici is introduced as an attendant in the pontifical group, and is again introduced as Pope; so that in this composition there are now two portraits of Leo X. one as a cardinal, and another as the supreme head of the Catholic church; which is not likely to have happened but from the death of Julius taking place after the portrait of the cardinal was painted; as in the other pictures the portrait of Julius II. is conspicuous and important.

[i] Vide the Life and Pontificate of Leo X. vol. iv. p. 227.

from the manner in which they are executed, that he could only have made the Cartoons; and from respect to his old master, Pietro Perugino, the ceiling was suffered to remain, which in the other rooms consist of eight historical and allegorical subjects, besides an equal number on a small scale, combining with a rich display of grotesque and arabesque ornament. The Hall of Constantine, completing this suite of apartments, was left to be finished from his designs, having painted only two single figures of Mercy and Justice. That he was otherwise much employed, and almost monopolized the court favour, there can be no doubt; but after the completion of the two first rooms, it is very uncertain whether he himself ever painted more than three single figures in the palace[k]; and his works in the Vatican after that time are executed more in the spirit of a manufactory, than with the taste and feeling of a painter; which gave rise to the opinion of Mengs, that Raffaello in the reign of Leo X. was not the same painter as Raffaello in the pontificate of Julius II.

Whether Leo X. had really a refined taste for works of art, it is not easy to determine; but this is known, that Raffaello made thirteen cartoons of religious subjects to complete the decoration of the Hall of Constantine, which were sent by the Pope into Flanders, to be returned in worsted

[k] The two figures of Justice and Mercy in the Hall of Constantine, and the figure of the woman carrying water to extinguish the fire in the "Incendio del Borgo."

copies, without any care to preserve the original works which were executed by Raffaello's own hand, nor any inquiry made concerning them after the subjects were manufactured in tapestry: by accident, however, seven are yet to be seen in this country, which, according to our own judgment, we may still be enabled to estimate that of the Pontiff.

Whether Leonardo da Vinci visited Rome in the pontificate of Leo seems doubtful; but if he did not, it is more than probable he was not invited; and if he did, it is quite certain he executed no commission for the Pope. The powers of this great man so far surpassed the ordinary standard of human genius, that he cannot be judged of by the common data by which it is usual to estimate the capacity of the human mind. He was a phenomenon that overstepped the bounds in every department of knowledge which limited the researches of his predecessors; and whether he is to be regarded for his accomplishments or his vast attainments, whether as the philosopher or the painter who made a new æra in the arts of design, he equally surprises our judgment, and enlarges our sphere of comprehension; and it must ever be a subject of sincere regret, that he who could successfully contend with Michel Angelo, and who painted the Last Supper in the Refectory of the Dominicans at Milan, should not have been known in Rome by any display of his powers in the golden days of Leo X.

To seek for reasons why Michel Angelo was not more fortunately employed during this reign, might afford a wide field of speculation; but if it should appear that the attachment of this Pope to the arts proceeded rather from their importance to the pomp and shew of power which was the delight of his mind, than from a more noble feeling of their worth; it is sufficiently satisfactory to account for his indifference and procrastination, to know, that wars, alliances, and subsidies, exhausted his treasury, and that the money was spent which was to have been appropriated to the façade of S. Lorenzo. At the death of Leo this part of the building was not advanced beyond its foundation, and the time of Michel Angelo had been consumed in making a road, in seeing that five columns were made at the quarry of Pietra Santa, in conducting them to the sea side, and in transporting one of them to Florence; this employment, with occasionally making some models in wax, and some trifling designs for the interior of a room in the Medici Palace, appears to have been all the benefit that was derived from his talents during the whole of this pontificate. As the patronage of the great often depends upon the character of the man as well as upon his genius, it has been supposed that the independent spirit which resisted the impetuosity of Julius II. was ill calculated to conciliate the accomplished manners of Leo X.: however this may have been, there appears no evidence that Michel Angelo ever refused submission to his will, or opposed his

authority with disrespect[1]: but as the surest way to every man's feelings is through his heart, it is easy to conceive that he was not likely to have the affections of a prince in whose mind there was no congeniality of sentiment with his own.

The attention of Leo to men of letters seems not at all to have overstepped the character of his times. Guicciardini had risen into fame and distinction before his reign, and without any assistance from the Medici family. The great

[1] Upon this point I feel particular regret in differing from the author of the Life of Leo X. who, in vindicating the conduct of the Pope, apologizes for Michel Angelo's perverseness of temper, "Genius resembles a proud steed, that, whilst he obeys the slightest touch of the kind hand of a master, revolts at the first indication of compulsion and of restraint. Every incident became a cause of contention between the artist and his patron. Michel Angelo preferred the marble of Carrara; the Pope directed him to open the quarries of Pietra Santa in the territories of Florence, the material of which was of a hard and intractable kind. The artist had called on the envoy of the Pope for a sum of money, and finding him engaged, had not only refused to wait for it, but when it was sent after him to Carrara had rejected it with contempt. Under these discouraging circumstances the proposed building made but little progress. The ardour of the Pontiff was chilled by the cold reluctance of the artist." *Life and Pontificate of Leo X.* vol. iv. p. 226.

That Michel Angelo did not like to be employed in the quarries of Pietra Santa, for marble but little adapted to his purpose when obtained, is very easily to be conceived; but he obeyed. With respect to his contemptuous conduct towards the Pope's envoy, it does not appear, by Vasari's account, that Michel Angelo refused to take the money sent after him to Carrara in any other way than by refusing to give a receipt, which he said he was not accustomed to do when he received money for others as an agent; and the person who was sent with it, fearing that he might give offence by adhering too rigidly to his instructions, left the money without a receipt. "Intese Jacopo Salviati dello arrivo di Michel Angelo, e non lo trovando in Fiorenza gli mando i mille scudi a Carrara. Voleva il mandato che gli facesse la ricevuta, al quale disse che erano per la spesa del Papa a non per interesse suo, che li riportasse, che non usava far quietanza nè ricevat per altri; onde per tema colui ritornò senza a Jacopo." *Vasari*, tom. iii. p. 233.

Venetian general, Bartolommeo D'Alviano, who, amidst the tumults of war, and the incessant occupation of an active military profession, has the honour of having in his train three of the greatest Latin poets of modern times: Andrea Navagero[m], Girolamo Fracastoro[n], and Giovanni Cotta[o]; and Ferdinand king of Naples, and his unfortunate sons Alfonso and Federigo, have the fame of being the patrons of Sanazzaro. Paulo Giovio was the Livy of Leo X. and was rewarded accordingly with a pension and with honours: but if he deserves the praise of ingenuity as a writer, he deserves eternal censure for the profligacy of his principles as

Although it should appear that Michel Angelo was not very well pleased with Salviati, yet in this transaction the Pope does not seem to make any part, and probably never heard of this dispute between Michel Angelo and Salviati's servant, for he continued at Carrara executing the commissions for which he was sent, when he received a letter from Leo to go and examine the newly discovered quarries at Pietra Santa, where he afterward, in obedience to the Pope's will, spent a great part of his time during the pontificate, notwithstanding it was an employment the most adverse to his feelings. Leo not only kept him in this situation, doing nothing which could be of any service to himself or the state, but refused him permission to make a monument to honour the poet Dantè, which he voluntarily offered to execute free of expence, to be placed in S. Maria Nuova, in Florence.

[m] Andrea Navagero was born of a patrician family at Venice, in the year 1483, and from his childhood gave indications of that extraordinary proficiency which he afterwards attained. See a very interesting account of this author in the Life and Pontificate of Leo X. vol. iii. p. 295.

[n] Girolamo Fracastoro is supposed to have been born in the same year with Navagero, and his celebrated poem, entitled, "Syphilis, sive de Morbo Gallico," has long ranked him among the first poets of modern times.

[o] The Poems of Cotta are printed in a scarce volume of the Carmina v. illustrium Poetarum, scilicet, Petri Bembi, And. Navagerii, Balth. Castilioni Joannis Cottæ et M Ant. Flaminii Ven. Valgrisi 1548, 8°.

an historian; and he has even taken care to avow these principles himself, as if to prevent others the trouble of discovering them in his writings, of which this extract from one of his letters may serve as an example.—"That a history should be faithful, and that matters of fact should not be trifled with, except by a certain latitude, which allows all writers, by ancient privilege, to aggravate or extenuate the faults of those on whom they treat; and, on the other hand, to elevate or depreciate their virtues. I should, indeed, be in a strange situation, if my friends and patrons owed me no obligation, when I make a piece of their own coin weigh one half more than that of the illiberal and worthless. You know by this sacred privilege, I have decorated some with rich brocade, and have deservedly wrapt up others in coarse dowlas. Woe to them who provoke my anger; for if they make me the mark for their arrows, I shall bring out my heavy artillery, and try who will have the worst of it. At all events they will die; and I shall at least escape, after death, that *ultima linea* of all controversies [p]." Several other passages might be cited from his letters, in which he openly acknowledges the venality of his writings, and accounts for his temporary silence, because he found no one to bribe him [q]. It is said that he boasted he

[p] *Lettere,* p. 12. *ap. Tirab.* vii. par. ii. p. 265.

[q] "Quia nemo nos conduxit; id est imperavit quisquam Minervæ nostræ." *Ibid.* 266.

had two pens, one of iron and the other of gold, which he made use of as occasion required; and it is certain that the latter, his *penna d'oro*, is frequently mentioned in his letters [r]. But the greatest blemish in his writings, and which has not sufficiently incurred the reprehension of his numerous critics, is the defective or perverted morality with which they abound.

Pietro Aretino had also the good fortune to be rewarded by the sovereign Pontiff with money to a princely amount. A man of detestable ingenuity, whose indecent and abominable writings it would be as disgusting to examine, as it would be tiresome to peruse those long and tedious pieces on religious subjects, by which he most probably sought to counterbalance, in the public opinion, the profaneness of his other productions [s]. Such are the facts and the account given us of these two men by the biographer of Leo X.

That Leo was often more fortunate in his patronage it is

[r] In a letter to Henry II. of France, he says, "Io ho già temperata la penna d'oro col finissimo inchiostro per scrivere in carte di lunga vita," &c. And in another to Giambattista Gastaldo, "Già ho temperata la penna d'oro per celebrare il valor vostro." *Lett.* p. 31. 35, *ap. Tirab.*

[s] Of the abilities of Aretino, whether in prose or verse, whether sacred or profane, epic or dramatic, panegyrical or satirical, notwithstanding their number and variety, not one piece exists, which, in point of literary merit, is entitled to approbation; yet the commendations he received from his contemporaries are beyond example; and by his unblushing effrontery, and the artful intermixture of censure and adulation, he contrived to lay under contribution almost all the sovereigns and eminent men of his time. *Life and Pontificate of Leo X.*

sincerely to be hoped, and his encouragement of VIDA ought not to be forgotten, although we have no distinct knowledge how he advanced his reputation or his fortune. When he was introduced by the bishop of Verona, we are told, he was received as an attendant on the court; and we learn from himself, that he was honoured by the Pontiff with particular distinction and kindness, and rewarded with honours and emolument[t]. From Vida himself we learn, that his *Christiad* was undertaken at the suggestion of Leo; but some doubt has been entertained respecting the motive which induced the Pope to employ the poet in this undertaking. Sanazzaro was thought to be unfavourable to his fame, and Vida, not without suspicion, employed as a rival. The poem was not finished till after the death of Leo, and to Clement VII. he was principally indebted for the reward of his labours: he gave him the appointment of apostolic secretary, and afterwards promoted him to the bishopric of Alba. He died, however, at a very advanced age, infinitely more honoured for his talents and his virtue, than envied for the reward that accompanied them. The revenue of his bishopric was more contracted than his charity and benevolence, and his days were ended in poverty. " I have seen," says Tiraboschi,

[t] " ——LEO jam carmina nostra
" Ipse libens relegebat. Ego illi carus, et auctus
" Muneribusque, opibusque, et honoribus insignitus."
Vidæ, Parentum Manibus, in. op. vol. ii. p. 144.

" an inventory of the furniture found in his episcopal palace, by which it was very clear that he died exceedingly poor[u]." Vida was buried in the cathedral of Alba, with this simple, but impressive epitaph on his tomb:

HIC SITUS EST M. HIERONYMUS VIDA.
CREMON. ALBÆ. EPISCOPUS.

Such an inscription is all that can be desired by a great man whose fame has higher claims to immortality.

In the reign of Leo X. neither morals nor science make any conspicuous figure, and his frigid conduct towards his old friend Ariosto savours but little of that true feeling of a noble and liberal mind which has been so largely attributed to his character. Soon after his accession to the pontificate Ariosto went to Rome, hoping at least to share those favours which were bestowed on others of inferior merit; but he was disappointed. Leo, upon his interview, recognized his old friend, kissed him on each cheek, and gave him assurances of his favour and esteem. His favour, however, extended no further than granting a bull to secure the copy-right of his Orlando Furioso, for which he paid the customary fees of office. The disappointment of Ariosto upon this occasion is evident from many passages in his Satires, in which he adverts to his journey to Rome with the vexation of a man who felt the injury, but with feelings superior to its evils;

[u] *Storia della Litt. Ital;* vol. vii. par. iii. p. 283.

and his epistolary satire to Annibale Malaguzzi, deserves to be recorded as an admirable example of the justness of his feelings, and the power of expressing, without acrimony, the severest censure on the operating principles of the human mind, which too often occur under similar circumstances. " Some persons may perhaps observe, that if I had gone to Rome in quest of benefices, I might have caught one before this time; especially as I had long been in favour with the Pope, and had ranked amongst his ancient friends before his virtue and his good fortune had exalted him to his high dignity, or the Florentines had opened their gates to him, or his brother Giuliano taken refuge at the court of Urbino, where, with the author of the *Cortegiano*, with Bembo, and other favourites of Apollo, he alleviated the hardships of his exile. When, too, the Medici again raised their heads in Florence, and the Gonfaloniere, flying from his palace, met with his ruin; and when he went to Rome to take the name of Leo, he still preserved his attachment to me. Often, whilst he was legate, has he told me that he should make no difference between his brother and myself. On this account it may appear strange to some, that when I paid him a visit at Rome he should have humbled my crest; but to those I shall reply by a story. Read it, my friend; for to read it will be less trouble to you, than it was to me to write it——

' There was once a season in which the earth was so parched up with heat, that it seemed as if Phœbus had

again relinquished the reins to Phaëton. Every well and every spring was dry. Brooks and streams, nay even the most celebrated rivers, might be crossed without a bridge. In these times there lived a shepherd, I know not whether to call him rich, or incumbered with herds and flocks, who having long sought for water in vain, turned his prayers toward that Being who never deserts those who trust in him; and by divine favour he was instructed, that at the bottom of a certain valley, he would find the welcome aid. He immediately departed with his wife, his children, and all his cattle; and according to his expectation found the spring. The well was not, however, very deep; and having only a small vessel to dispense the water, he desired his followers not to take it amiss if he secured the first draught for himself. The next, says he, is for my wife, and the third and fourth for my dear children, till all their thirst be quenched. The next must be distributed to such of my friends as have assisted me in opening the well. He then attends to his cattle, taking care to supply those first whose death would occasion him the greatest loss. Under these regulations they pass on, one after another, to drink. At length a poor parrot, which was very much beloved by its master, cried out, Alas! I am neither one of his relations, nor did I assist in digging the well; nor am I likely to be of more service to him in future than I have been in time past. Others, I observe, are still behind me; and even I shall die with thirst if I cannot elsewhere obtain relief.'

"With this story, my good cousin, you may dismiss those who think that the Pope should prefer me before the *Neri*, the *Vanni*, the *Lotti*, and the *Baci*, his nephews and relations, who must drink first; and afterwards those who have assisted in investing him with the richest of all mantles. When these are satisfied, he will favour those who espoused his cause against Soderini, on his return to Florence. One person will say, I was with Piero in Casentino, and narrowly escaped being taken and killed. I, cries Brandino, lent him money. He lived, exclaimed a third, a whole year at my expence, whilst I furnished him with arms, with clothes, with money, and with horses. If I wait until all these are satisfied, I shall certainly either perish with thirst, or see the well exhausted [x]."

If this sarcasm may at the same time be considered as an apology for the Pope, justice must not be forgotten. And he, whose hardships were alleviated in exile by the Duke of Urbino, deserves but little excuse for his treatment of Ariosto, who so materially contributed his share; when, in return, he availed himself of the first opportunity to dispossess his benefactor of his dominions, and endeavoured to lose the recollection of his friend by cold and distant civility. That the great have oftentimes more claims upon their patronage than they have power to bestow can readily be conceded; but when justice yields to ingratitude and

[x] *Ariosto*, Satire iii. *Life and Pontificate of Leo X.* vol. iii. p. 207.

selfish views, it is any thing but that which it pretends to be.

After these remarks it might be difficult to conceive by what qualities Leo X. was rendered illustrious; but his character by Guicciardini, who cannot be suspected of any disposition to dishonour his name, is sufficiently satisfactory to account for any extent of popularity he may have possessed. "He was a man of the greatest liberality, if it be proper to give that name to a profuseness in expence which surpassed all bounds. After his assumption of the pontificate, he conducted himself with so much magnificence and splendour with a truly royal spirit, as would have been surprising even to one who had descended by long succession from kings and emperors. Nor was he only profuse of money, but of all favours that are at the disposal of a Pope, which he bestowed so unmeasurably that he brought the spiritual authority into contempt, and disordered the economy of the court. To a remarkable easiness of manner he added a most profound dissimulation, with which he circumvented every one in the beginning of his pontificate, and thus passed for a very good prince; I dare not say an apostolical goodness; for in our corrupt times, the goodness of a pontiff is commended when he does not surpass the wickedness of other men; but he was reputed merciful, of most courtly manners, and studious of not giving offence to any one[y]."

y *Guicciardini Historia d'Italia,* lib. xvi. p. 480. Ed. Venetia M.D.LXXIIII.

Such is the summary account of Leo X. by a friend to the house of Medici; but from whose immortal history it is easy to perceive, that in the various transactions in which he was concerned, the morality of the Sovereign Pontiff was subservient to his pleasures; and to aggrandize his family no resources were untried, and no means unexhausted. Courteous and magnificent to the great sovereigns of Europe, and faithless to those who were unable to oppose his machinations; and with all his claims to popularity and esteem, it would be difficult to find one act of state policy without its preponderance of vice, or one example of virtue without an alloy to vitiate our sense of its importance, in the dispensation of laws, or the government of mankind.

Upon the death of Leo, Cardinal di Tortoso was chosen to fill the papal chair, by the title of Adrian VI. The façade of S. Lorenzo was now altogether laid aside, and Michel Angelo employed himself upon two statues originally intended for the monument of Julius, and which probably he now proposed to adapt to the new design. Having been interrupted during the whole reign of Leo X. from prosecuting the monument, Francesco Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino, nephew to Julius II. was impatient, and insisted that he should account for sixteen thousand crowns supposed to have been received in the pontificate of his uncle, and petitioned Adrian to cite him to Rome to refund that sum, or give a satisfactory account of its expenditure. Michel Angelo was desirous to make out the account in Florence,

but the Duke insisted upon his coming to Rome,and the Pope issued his mandate to that effect; but the Cardinal Giuliano de' Medici, who at that time held the government of Florence, refused his compliance with the summons, assuring his Holiness that he would be responsible for a just accommodation of the dispute. Giuliano, who had a higher value for the talents of Michel Angelo than his cousin Leo, commissioned him at this time to build a library and new sacristy to the church of S. Lorenzo, to serve as a mousoleum for the Medici family; and also to execute manuments to the memory of the Dukes Giuliano and Lorenzo, to be placed in it; which he assigned as a reason to the Pope for detaining him in Florence. These works took up the whole of his attention during the pontificate of Adrian, which, to the gratification of the College of Cardinals, was but of short duration; he was elected by accident[z], and no sooner chosen than they repented; as he was a man hardly known by name, and had never seen Italy; so that after a pontificate of twenty months, he died on the 14th of September, 1523, without lamentation or regret; and in his short reign was neither beloved or feared. With his illustrious predecessor religion was an embodied phantom, to frighten the world into obedience, and grasp the possessions which belonged to others; but Adrian was a scholar

[z] *Guicciardini Hist. d'Italia*, lib. xiv. p. 420.

and a theologian, and instead of the principles of Machiavelli, he studied the works of the Fathers; so that in a court of dissipation he had no friends, and with the skilful in political intrigue he was considered a barbarian. His high office he never made subservient to personal ostentation or family aggrandizement, which in purer times would have been a virtue, but in the successor of Leo X. served only to stamp his character with meanness and unprincely parsimony. Thus it happens in temporal affairs, that he who lives in an æra unsuited to his virtues, is more depreciated than he who conforms to the vices of his age.

Adrian was succeeded by Cardinal de' Medici, with the title of Clement VII. who having a personal interest in appropriating the abilities of Michel Angelo to himself in order to execute the works he had begun at San. Lorenzo, he was prevented from completing the monument of Julius, and the Duke of Urbino felt himself highly dissatisfied; upon which Michel Angelo went to Rome to advise with the Pope what line of conduct he might be permitted to pursue. With respect to the supposed sixteen thousand crowns in question, if a fair balance were made he would rather be a creditor than a debtor, and therefore was ready to meet the question in any way that was most agreeable to his Holiness. The Pope advised him to see the Duke's agents, and make a fair exposition of all the circumstances of the case; anticipating that if they found there was no surplus of

money remaining in his hands, they would not be anxious about the completion of the work. The unfortunate state of the affairs of Italy, and the difficulty in which he was involved between his own inclinations and the necessity of complying with the commands of the Pope, made his stay in Rome unpleasant and unsatisfactory.

The celebrated battle of Pavia, which gave an alarming ascendency to the wide extending power of Charles V. perplexed the governments of Italy to know how to secure their independence. The Pope, with complicated views and latent schemes, was not less impressed with the pending danger than the surrounding states, and from this time his artifices to disperse the gathering storm only brought the nearer prospect of his own ruin, till he himself was made a prisoner, and his capital sacked by the licentious soldiery of the Duke of Bourbon[a]. In this anxious state of public affairs Michel Angelo preferred Florence to Rome, and without coming to any definite conclusion with the agents of the Duke of Urbino, he returned, and continued his works in architecture and sculpture for the chapel and library of S. Lorenzo. About this time he executed a statue of Christ,

[a] The battle of Pavia, in which Francis I. was made prisoner, was fought on the 25th of February, 1525.

Rome was sacked, and Bourbon, who commanded the army, killed before the Castle of St. Angelo, on the 6th of May, 1527, and the Pope imprisoned until the 9th of December following.

of the size of nature, to be placed on an altar in the church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, in Rome [b].

From the year 1512, when the Gonfaloniere Soderini was driven from his situation at the head of the republic, Florence and its dependencies became subject to the Medici family. This city had risen into importance from the constitution of its government, and grown rich by the profits of trade. Its wealth and power therefore made it an object of the first importance to Leo X. to direct its counsels and dispose of its resources to his own advantage, and, during his reign of eight years and as many months, it contributed no less than two millions of ducats to enable him to seize on the neighbouring states, and act the part of a splendid sovereign with the potentates of Europe, with a view to the future establishment of his own family on a throne.

Florence for fifteen years had reluctantly yielded to the necessity of the times. From the death of Lorenzo the distinguished title bestowed upon his father, of *Pater Patriæ*, could not, with the shadow of propriety, be extended to any of his successors. With gold in one hand and the scourge in the other, the most discordant parts of a state may be kept together; and those who surround a throne and enjoy the benefit of making a concentric circle, will be at once its safeguard and support; but this support in times

[b] This statue is now in the church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva; but is not placed over an altar, but on a pedestal at the entrance of the choir.

of prosperity which is enough for all the common purposes of government, is feeble and inefficient on the eve of its dissolution: when benefits decline murmurs arise, and the mass of the people, awed or persuaded into silence, are then suffered to exercise their power, and level that authority to the ground by which alone they were controlled.

By the indiscretion of his measures, and the duplicity of his conduct, Clement VII. made himself despised by his enemies, and but little respected by his friends. No sooner was the ecclesiastical state a prey to a foreign enemy than his adherents in Tuscany were weakened and diminished, and his legate, seeing no prospect of being reimbursed in the expences necessary to maintain the authority with which he was invested, resigned it into the hands of the citizens. Thus, on the 16th of May, 1527, Florence resumed its ancient form of government, and Nicolo Capponi, a man of high consideration and attached to the constitution of his country, was chosen Gonfaloniere.

The dangers to which Italy was at this time exposed by the preponderancy of the Emperor Charles V. prompted the Venetians, the Dukes of Ferrara, Mantua, and Urbino, to unite in the interest of France and England to oppose the progress of his power, and, at the particular solicitation of the Duke of Ferrara, Florence joined in the confederacy. From the 6th of May 1527, till the 9th of December of the same year, the Pope was kept a close prisoner in the castle of S. Angelo, during which time the Florentines had nothing

to apprehend from his influence; but he was no sooner at liberty than the recovery of Florence was the first object of his ambition. In the vicissitude of war and the fluctuation of interests he kept his eye steadily on that object, and though by his shifting management he was despised and detested by all, yet his friendship became necessary as the profits of war became more doubtful to the contending parties; and the Emperor, in a political view, considering his alliance of importance to his future plans, offered him such terms as were readily accepted, and a treaty was concluded at Barcelona, on the 5th of August, 1529, in which, among other articles, the Emperor engaged to grant the sovereignty of Florence to the Pope for Alessandro de' Medici, his great nephew, and make it hereditary in his family.

The republic now saw its approaching ruin, and it was from France alone, to whose interest it had been constantly attached, that it could hope to ward off the pending blow; but Francis I. though with the warmest assurances of friendship, found it expedient to come to an accommodation with the Emperor; and in a treaty at Cambray, concluded at the same time with that of Barcelona, the Florentines were left to take care of themselves. Under these circumstances the magistrates of the republic endeavoured to negotiate with Charles V. offering to put themselves under his protection; but it was now too late, the republic was sold,

and it was only left for the Emperor to see that his part of the contract was fulfilled.

The Gonfaloniere Capponi, previous to this cloudy prospect of affairs, entered into a private correspondence with the Pope to palliate an evil which it was not difficult to anticipate, yet without relaxing any measures that ultimate necessity might require. The city was ordered to be completely fortified, and in every respect to be put in the best state of resistance and defence, and Michel Angelo was appointed military architect and master of the ordnance. The correspondence between the Gonfaloniere and Clement VII. was soon discovered by his enemies, and in the enthusiasm of democracy, and the jealousy inseparable from the republican form of government, he was immediately accused of treachery. The citizens rose in arms, seized upon the government palace, convened the magistrates, and put Capponi under an arrest. He was afterwards tried according to law, and honourably acquitted; but was, nevertheless, succeeded in his office by one Francesco Carduci, who neither for virtue nor ability was worthy of so great an honour, or so important a trust.

At this time the city of Ferrara was considered to be the best fortified town in Italy, and the Duke Alfonso to be eminently distinguished for his abilities in that branch of knowledge. Michel Angelo was therefore advised to make him a visit previous to his commencing the fortification of Florence, in order to avail himself of his experience. He

approved of the measure, and embraced the opportunity. When he arrived at Ferrara the Duke received him with the utmost courtesy, and without hesitation shewed him every part of the works, and made every communication without reserve: he shewed him also his private collection of virtù; and when Michel Angelo was about to take his leave, he facetiously said, "You are now my prisoner, and if you wish to have your liberty, you must make me a promise to let me have something of your own hand, either in sculpture or painting, when it may be convenient." To this flattering request he willingly complied; and on his return, notwithstanding his time was much taken up in the fortification of the city, he began a picture of Jupiter and Leda, including the birth of Castor and Pollux, which was afterwards finished; but from a misunderstanding between him and the Duke's agent, the picture was never sent to Ferrara, but went into France, and was purchased by Francis I [c].

When the treaty of Barcelona was concluded, the Emperor gave orders to the Prince of Orange, at the Pope's

[c] Vasari says, that Antonio Mini, who was a scholar of Michel Angelo, and who had two unmarried sisters to provide for, begged this picture; which was given to him, with two cases of models, and many very valuable Cartoons and designs, all of which he took into France after the siege of Florence in the year 1530. He sold the picture to Francis I. and it was placed in the palace of Fontainbleau; but A. Mini dying after a short residence in that country, the other works of Michel Angelo, which he possessed, were stolen and dispersed. *Vita de Michel Angelo,* vol. iii. p. 245.—This picture of the Leda is generally supposed to be lost.

desire, to attack the state of the Florentines. The Prince was then employed in reviewing the army on the confines of the kingdom of Naples, and on receiving this order repaired to Rome to make the necessary arrangement for the expedition. The forces under his command consisted of three thousand German, and four thousand Italian infantry, and the Marquis del Guasto, who commanded the Spanish troops in Puglia, was afterwards to join him. On the 19th of August the Prince arrived with his army at Terni and Foligno, the place of their rendezvous, and proceeded immediately to besiege Spelle; which, though capable of making a good defence, disgracefully surrendered without resistance. Perugia, garrisoned by Florentine troops, and commanded by Malatesta Baglioni, was the next point of attack; but Malatesta was of doubtful fidelity, and the republic considered it more prudent to withdraw their garrison, than to reinforce it. The city therefore fell into the hands of the enemy with little opposition, and the troops were marched to Cortona. Thus the military operations of the enemy were rapidly brought to the confines of their own immediate territory.

The war now advancing with little interruption towards Florence itself, the government exercised the utmost skill by entering into propositions and negotiation with the Emperor and the Pope, to retard the march of the enemy, that time might be obtained to fortify the city. In addition to the works already projected, Michel Angelo proposed to con-

struct a fortification on a height commanding Florence and the surrounding country, called Monte San Miniato: he satisfactorily proved that, if this post should be possessed by the enemy, it would be of the most serious disadvantage, and as a citadel might be of the utmost importance to themselves: his plan was approved, and he immediately proceeded to carry it into effect. The endeavours to gain time were ineffectual, and the Prince advanced to Cortona. In the first assault he was repulsed; but from the city not being sufficiently defended, and from the desire the republic had to concentrate their force, it surrendered on the 17th of September; and Arezzo, from the same reason, capitulated in two days afterwards.

The Emperor now openly avowed he would no longer give audience to the Florentine ambassadors unless the Medici family were restored. Upon this occasion the Prince of Orange declared to them, that he detested the covetous ambition of the Pope, and the injustice of the enterprise, and lamented that his duty as a soldier compelled him to act so repugnantly to his feelings[d].

The Prince was at the head of ten thousand five hundred infantry, composed of Germans, Italians, Spaniards, and eight hundred cavalry, but was in want of artillery; he therefore applied to the Sensee to accommodate him with

[d] "——Et Oranges benche congli Oratori che erano appresso a lui detestasse senza respetto la cupidità del Papa, e la ingiustitia di quella impresa, nondimeno haveva dechiarato non potere mancare di continuarla senza la restitutione de' Medici."

ordnance. This request they had no inclination to grant, but were in no condition to refuse; thus being without an alternative, they met the difficulty by using a discreet procrastination, which checked the evil they had no other means of alleviating.

The Florentine deputies who were refused an audience with the Emperor, were more fortunate with the Pope; to their solicitation, which had for its object to avert the approaching evils of the war, and the calamities of a siege, he answered, that he had no design to make any change in the liberty of the city; but had been compelled to undertake the enterprise, not so much from the injuries he had received from the republic, or the necessity of securing his own estate, as by a convention he was constrained to make with the Emperor, and that his honour being now interested in prosecuting the undertaking, he demanded nothing of them but that they would voluntarily put themselves in his power; which, when done, he would demonstrate how much he had at heart the happiness of their common country [e]. Such was the language of him who ought to

[e] "Haveva intrattanto il Papa udito gli Oratori Fiorentini et risposto loro, che la intentione sua, non era d'alterare la libertà della Città, ma che non tanto per le ingiurie recevute da quel Governo, et dalla necessità d'assicurare lo Stato suo, quanto per la capitolatione fatta con Cesare era stato costretto a fare la impresa: nella quale trattandosi hora dell' interesse dell' honore suo; non chiedeva altro, se non che liberamente si rimettessero in potestà sua, et che fatto questo, dimostrerebbe il buon animo ch'aveva al beneficio della patria comune." *Guicciardini His. d'Italia,* lib. xix. tom. ii. p. 98.

have had more respect for truth, or more sense not to have seen the folly of such professions, which it was obvious he could have no intention of keeping.

The Prince of Orange still advanced, and on the 24th of September was in the Vale of Arno, only eight miles distant from Florence, where he halted for the arrival of the ordnance from Siena, which began to move on the ninth; but the same tardiness which delayed their preparation impeded their progress, and it was not until the 20th of October that the artillery joined the army, and arrived in the plain of Ripoli, two miles from Florence. These slow movements gave Michel Angelo an opportunity of finishing the fortification, and putting the city in a complete state of defence. Such delay not having been anticipated, the council and magistracy of ten, appointed to manage the affairs of the war, were unanimously of opinion, when the army advanced to Feghine and Ancisa on the 27th of September, that it would be most prudent to send a *charte blanche* to Rome to submit themselves to the will of the Pope; but the Gonfaloniere with the supreme magistracy, without whose consent the resolution could not pass, were of a different opinion, and being supported by the popular influence, the measure was laid aside; the officers adjudging the fortification to be sufficiently strong to resist the attack of the enemy, all inclination to agreement with his Holiness ceased.

On the 24th of October, the Prince of Orange encamped on the hills surrounding the city, and his first operation was throwing up a rampart to storm the bastion of St. Miniato; but his plan was frustrated by the measures Michel Angelo had previously taken for its defence. Besides cannon planted in the garden of the convent, he placed two large guns on the top of a bell-tower commanding the intrenchments, which so completely annoyed the enemy, that their intention to storm the bastion was soon given up, and the artillery directed to demolish the tower. Michel Angelo, however, adopted an effectual measure for its preservation; from the top he hung mattresses of wool on the side exposed to the attack, and by means of a bold projecting cornice from which they were suspended a considerable space was left between them and the wall: this plan he effected in the night, and the future cannonading of the enemy only served to shew to advantage this simple expedient. The Prince of Orange now directed his skill to dismount the cannon, and not being more successful, began to consider the siege of Florence a difficult undertaking, and in future conducted his mode of attack rather with skirmishes than after the manner of a siege.

The Emperor and the Pope at this time had an interview at Bologna, and as the siege of Florence was likely to be of longer continuance than was at first expected, his Holiness interested himself to produce a peace between

Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, the Republic of Venice, and Charles V.; and on the 23d of December, 1529, an amicable adjustment took place between all parties. After eight years warfare Italy, with exception to the Florentine state, was restored to tranquillity.

The Emperor having withdrawn his troops from the Venetian territory, sent seven thousand three hundred infantry and three hundred light cavalry, with twenty-five pieces of artillery, to reinforce the Prince of Orange before the walls of Florence. Notwithstanding this reinforcement, he wanted either skill or courage to make an assault upon the city; and the Florentines, not judging it prudent to hazard a general battle, the siege was converted into little other than a blockade. The Florentines, though unassisted by any ally, had sufficient resources to hold out for many months, and they hoped that time might do for them what they were unable to do themselves, as the troops were composed of different nations, among whom dissensions might arise to diminish their strength; but that which they calculated upon in the enemy, unfortunately soon happened in their own army: for in times of danger the most trifling assistance is magnified into importance, and inevitable evils are borne with murmur and discontent.

Napoleone Orsino, who received pay from the republic for his services, began to consider that more was to be

gained by making a timely arrangement with the Emperor, than by being faithful to his engagement with the Florentines; and Malatesta Baglioni had also two objects in view, one to receive the pay of the republic for his troops, and the other to gain the sovereignty of Peruggia for himself. To obtain this last object was his constant aim, and for that end he privately negotiated with the Pope, and is supposed to have betrayed the counsels of the republic.

Michel Angelo, after the most active service for six months, in which he defended the city and repelled the repeated attacks of the enemy, was secretly told of treacherous plans to undermine the republic. He lost no time in making the communication known to the government, shewing at once the danger to which they were exposed, and how their safety might be provided for; but instead of attending to him with due respect, he was reproached with credulous timidity: offended with this treatment, he observed it was useless for him to be taking care of the walls, if they were determined not to take care of themselves. Depending upon the correctness of his information, and the perspicacity of his own judgment, he saw inevitable ruin to the common cause; this, added to the personal disrespect he received, determined him to give up his employment and withdraw from the city. As the nature of his information did not allow him to make a public declaration of his intention, he withdrew privately; but he was no sooner gone than his departure created general concern. Upon his

leaving Florence he proceeded to Ferrara[f], and from thence to Venice; where, as soon as he arrived, he was followed by the importunities of persons high in office, soliciting him to return, and not abandon the post committed to his charge; at the same time softening by expletives the rudeness and inattention with which he had been treated. These solicitations, addressed to an ardent mind and strong patriotic feelings, prompted him to obey the will of his country and his friends, and without delay he returned and resumed his situation.

[f] The following anecdote has been recorded by Vasari respecting Michel Angelo's leaving Florence upon this occasion. When he privately withdrew, he took with him Antonio Mini, his scholar and assistant, and one Piloto, a goldsmith, each wearing a mantle lined or quilted with money. As soon as they arrived at Ferrara they were obliged to give in their names to the officer of police; in consequence of which the Duke Alfonso became acquainted with Michel Angelo's arrival, contrary to his intention. The Duke, who was a great lover of virtù, was delighted with this unexpected visit, and immediately sent one of the principal officers of his court to invite him to his palace. As he was thus discovered it was useless to make apologies, and went immediately. His highness received him with the most marked attention, but accused him of being shy and distant: he entreated him to stay at Ferrara, where the most honourable provision should be made for him in his own palace. This honour he declined; the Duke then hoped he would stay during the war, and renewed the offer to accommodate him with whatever was in his power. That Michel Angelo might not be outdone in courtesy, he turned towards his two companions, at the same time addressing himself to the Duke, saying, I have brought twelve thousand crowns to Ferrara (pointing to the mantles they wore), which, if you have any occasion for them, they are much at your service, together with your humble servant.

After some conversation with the Duke upon various subjects, who shewed him every thing he had in his palace worth his attention, Michel Angelo retired to the inn, as his stay in Ferrara was determined to be short; upon which his highness gave orders to the host that every possible attention might be shewn to his guests, and that they might not be charged with any expence.

At the end of the year the Pope shewed a desire to negotiate, and sent the Bishop of Faenza to Florence for that purpose. Upon this overture the republic sent deputies to his Holiness and the Emperor, but with express orders to listen to no proposition for changing the government or diminishing the authority of the magistrates; from these preliminaries, the negotiation with the Pontiff was no sooner commenced than concluded, each having no inclination to yield to the other the sole object of the war. By the Emperor they were refused an audience, and they returned without any hope of pacification.

This unsuccessful attempt demonstrating to the republic the impracticability of making any peace but with the sword; all the general officers convened themselves in the church of St. Nicholas to swear to defend the city till death; and after mass took the oath in the presence of their Captain General; Napoleone Orsino making the only exception, upon which he quitted the service. The troops, which consisted of nine or ten thousand within the walls, were attached to the cause, and without intermission discharged their duty with readiness and fidelity.

Until the 21st of March, 1530, Florence received no injury from the besiegers, except the inconvenience of an imperfect blockade. The Prince of Orange, fatigued with delay, and having less confidence in the measures he was pursuing, began to make active preparations to take the city by storm. After a severe skirmish, in which

considerable loss was sustained, he made a vigorous attempt to effect a breach in the walls; but Michel Angelo so well provided against his hostile means, that after exerting all his resources, he found it prudent to retire. On the 9th of May another skirmish took place, in which the Florentines lost one hundred and thirty men killed and wounded, and the besiegers above two hundred, among whom was a Spanish general officer. Malatesta Baglioni and Stefano Colonna, at the head of three thousand foot, afterwards made an unsuccessful attack upon the Germans fortified in their intrenchments. In this sally Stefano Colonna performed his part, and was wounded in the action; but not being supported by the Captain General, who was accused of cowardice or treachery, the enterprise failed.

The King of France, who from time to time promised them all the assistance in his power consistent with the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed with respect to the Emperor, at length was enabled to manifest his sincerity, or the want of it. In the beginning of June his two sons were ransomed and delivered up to him; but the problem, of knowing how subordinate states may be disposed of to the greatest advantage and the least sacrifice of external decorum, is among one of the most intricate questions a statesman has to resolve. Francis I. and Henry VIII. of England wished to detach the Pontiff from the interest of Charles V.; for this object it was necessary to gain some

share of his favour and esteem, and any measures that could accelerate the accomplishment of his favourite object were sure of success. Francis therefore wished the Florentines to treat with his Holiness; in other words, to yield and acknowledge the sovereignty of the Medici family: from this proposition it was clear, all expectation was dissipated which had hitherto remained, and not less obvious, as is common in the ordinary operations of the human mind, that when advice is not complied with which is given by superior power, the first step is made to dissension, and the foundation laid for future hostility. In this state of affairs little was to be expected. A scarcity of provisions increased, and every avenue was now cut off by the besieging enemy; yet the spirit of the people was not depressed, nor their perseverance relaxed. They still kept possession of Pisa with a body of troops under the command of Francesco Ferruccio, an officer of great bravery and unquestionable fidelity.

In a case of desperate necessity it is prudent to adopt desperate measures. The Florentines therefore sent orders to Ferruccio to assemble his troops, leave Pisa, and make the best of his way to Florence, in order to enable them to hazard a general battle. What the result of this event might have been, if one common interest had equally animated and directed all, would be rash to determine; the strength of men is not in arithmetical proportion to their numbers, but to the devotion manifested in exposing their lives for the

cause in which they are engaged: an individual who feels the full dignity of his nature, inspired with the love of virtue and justice, is a host when opposed to the contracted meanness of selfish views; but if there be division in the councils, and treachery in the executive power, it is hopeless to calculate upon success with any numbers, or in any enterprise.

The Florentines were unfortunate in the choice of their Captain General; he was known to hold an intimate correspondence with the Prince of Orange, and to intrigue with the court of Rome; upon this occasion, there is every reason to believe, he communicated the plans of the government to the enemy, and gave assurances to the Prince that he would not attack the remainder of his troops which he might leave, if he were disposed to intercept Ferruccio. Be this as it may, the Prince drew off his army, and put himself on the march, with correct information; and in the mountains of Pistoïa, not far from Pisa, the two armies met, and the conflict, equally honourable to the bravery of both, determined the fate of Florence. The Prince, who rather performed the duty of a private soldier than a general, was killed in the action; but his superior force overpowered the enemy, and obtained the victory. Ferruccio was made prisoner, and put to death afterwards by the barbarity of the Imperial General. Thus the last hope of the republic was eclipsed.

Deserted by all human assistance, and the inevitable pros-

pect of famine before them, their horizon was rendered dark and dreadful; yet in this case of horrible necessity, the government was persuaded that it were better to find a common grave, than to yield to the cruelty and oppression of the Pope, and his great nephew Alexander de' Medici, one of the most viciated and worthless of human beings. In the last extremity, when life is not worth its price, it has been held justifiable to make the adversary taste the draught he compels his opponent to drink; and with these feelings the Florentines determined to die as soldiers in the intrenchments of their enemies. Malatesta Baglioni however was of a different opinion; not from any higher sense of virtue, but because he consulted his own personal advantage, and the interest of the Pope, who had long secretly given him assurances of the sovereignty of Perugia[s].

This declaration of hostility to the government produced the greatest distraction; Baglioni received his orders of dismission, and was commanded to withdraw; but he possessed too much military power to be controlled by the civil authority; he drew his dagger upon the deputation charged with the commission, wounded one, and would have killed him on the spot, had he not been fortunately rescued by the attendants who were present. By this act of violence he manifested his power, and made it sufficiently evident the authority no longer resided with the Gonfaloniere and

[s] *Vide Guicciardini*, lib. xix p. 97. Ed. Venetia. MDCXXIII.

the magistrates, but with himself as Captain General of the army. Thus the city being at his disposal, and the work of dissimulation at an end, on the 9th of August four persons were nominated to enter into a treaty of capitulation with Don Ferrando da Gonzaga, who succeeded the Prince of Orange as commander in chief of the Imperial army: on the next day the convention was concluded. Among the principal articles, it was agreed that the Pope and the Florentines should concede to the Emperor the authority to declare within three months their form of government, with a useless clause to preserve their liberty; that there should be a general amnesty for all injuries to the Pope, his friends and servants; and until the will of the Emperor should be known, Malatesta Baglioni should remain with two thousand foot to garrison the city. Anxious, however, to receive the reward of his services, he immediately organized the government as it stood before the year 1527, and gave up the sovereignty to the Pope, who in return permitted him to leave Florence, and take possession of Perugia. Here ended the Florentine republic, after three centuries of varied and fluctuating fortune; yet amidst civil dissensions, internal calamity, or external war, genius flourished; and whatever may be the cause, it is to this contracted territory that our enlightened times owe more than to all the states in Europe that assisted in its ruin [h].

[h] In the year 1532, Alexandro d' Medici was placed at the head of the government, with the title of Doge; and his authority soon afterwards strengthened by his marriage with Margaretta of Austria, natural daughter of the Emperor Charles V.

The most ardent wishes of the Pope being accomplished, it was reasonable to expect, both as a temporal prince dignified with honourable feelings, and as the vicegerent of Christ the dispenser of mercy, that he would have scrupulously fulfilled all the conditions of the treaty: but neither honour nor christianity influenced his mind; he sought revenge with a vindictive spirit, and adopted the shadow of justice, only to sanction its most flagrant violation. The general amnesty to all those who had injured the Pope, his friends, and servants, his Holiness professed most faithfully to observe and willingly to pardon; but the injuries committed by the same persons in the affairs of the republic, he knew of no justice to extenuate, or mercy to forgive; he therefore put to death, imprisoned, and banished, at his own discretion [i].

Michel Angelo, knowing his character, immediately on the surrender of the city left his own house, and hid himself in an obscure retreat by the assistance of a friend, to whom alone the knowledge of his seclusion was intrusted [k]. And his anticipation was not incorrect; for the Pope no sooner had taken possession, than his house was diligently searched, not a recess of any kind escaped, nor a trunk left unopened that could be supposed capable of containing him. After several days,

[i] *Guicciardini*, lib. xx. p. 106.

[k] Michel Angelo is understood to have secreted himself in the bell-tower of the church of Saint Nicholas. *N. dell' Ed. di Roma*, vol. iii. p. 244.

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when all search was ineffectual, his Holiness expressly wrote to Florence, offering Michel Angelo, by a public manifesto, the most positive assurances, if he would discover himself he should not be molested, on condition that he would finish the two monuments in St. Lorenzo already begun. As the condition seemed to offer some security for the performance of the amnesty, he accepted the terms. With little respect for the persons his genius was to commemorate, and with less affection for his employer, he hastened to complete his labour; not with any ardour of sentiment, but as a task which was the price of his liberty.

These monuments record the names of Giuliano de' Medici, the brother of Leo X. and their nephew Lorenzo. Their statues are seated in Roman military habits, and with corresponding designs on their sarcophagi, are four recumbent figures, emblematically personifying Morning and Evening, and Day and Night.

Why this cycle of time was chosen for two such men, is difficult to determine; since the former possessed no quality to distinguish him above the ordinary capacity which claims our respect, and the latter no quality that deserves to be remembered. In the same sacristy is a statue of a Madonna, with an infant Christ in her arms, also by Michel Angelo, which deserves to be ranked, for the elegance and simplicity of the composition, with the best of his performances in sculpture.

Tranquillity being restored to Italy, Michel Angelo was

again called upon by the Duke of Urbino to complete the monument of Julius II. agreeable to the last design. No circumstance in his life was attended with more sincere regret and mortification than the delay, which at once impeached his gratitude, and injured his reputation; but Leo X. and Clement VII. successively prevented the accomplishment of that object, and the Pope now sent for him to Rome to make such an arrangement as might be favourable to his own plans, being anxious to employ Michel Angelo in Florence. The Duke was given to understand, that Michel Angelo retained a considerable sum of money which had been received from his uncle Julius, but upon investigation it proved to be a mistake. All the sums received at various times did not amount to one third of what was agreed to be paid by the Cardinals Aginense and Santi Quattro, according to the contract made after the death of the Pope. Clement VII. being desirous of annulling this contract, considered the result of this enquiry as particularly favourable to his views, he therefore instructed him to tell the agents of the Duke, that he was ready to finish the monument, but that he must know who was to pay for it[1]. This circumstance not having been calculated upon, from the previous opinion entertained of his having received more than sufficient for its completion, produced some deliberation. After considering,

[1] *Condivi*, sect. xlviii.

however, it was determined he should make a monument for the money in hand, and instead of its being insulated, it should be a façade, and that the marble already provided should be employed in the best manner to that end, with an obligation on his part to make six statues himself; and it was also further agreed, that he might work for the Pope in Florence four months in the year, where he was then building the sacristy and library of St. Lorenzo.

When this arrangement was concluded, he first went to Florence to accommodate the Pope, and after staying four months returned to Rome to fulfil his engagement with the Duke of Urbino; but Clement VII. who was not in the habit of keeping his promises, or permitting others to do so where it interfered with his inclination or his interest, determined it otherwise; he therefore ordered him to paint the two end walls of the Sistine Chapel. Under any other circumstances Michel Angelo would have been happy in any opportunity to advance that great work, which the liberal patronage of Julius II. so magnificently projected; but at this time his engagement with the Duke of Urbino was paramount to every other consideration.

After he finished the ceiling in the pontificate of Julius, he made several studies for the west end of the chapel, where he proposed to have painted the Fall of Satan. Whether in the original design of the whole work he intended the Day of Judgment to have occupied the opposite end, is not certain; but this subject was now determined to

fill that space[m]. Michel Angelo being unable openly to oppose the will of the Pope, procrastinated the work as much as possible, and while he was engaged in making the cartoon, secretly employed as much of his time as circumstances would allow in forwarding the monument.

On the 25th of September, 1534, Clement VII. died, whose eventful reign was more chequered than that of any prince of modern times. Guicciardini, who has recorded his actions with the feeling of partiality, has left this portrait of him in a few words. "He was rather morose and disagreeable, than of a pleasant and affable temper; reputed avaricious; hardly to be trusted, and naturally averse from doing a kindness; very grave and circumspect in his actions; much master of himself, and of great capacity, if timidity had not frequently corrupted his judgment[n]."

To the vacant chair of St. Peter, Alessandro Farnese, Dean of the sacred College, was elected on the same day the cardinals entered the conclave, and proclaimed supreme head of the church by the title of Paul III[o]. As soon as he was elected he sent for Michel Angelo to engage him in his service. Fearful of being diverted from fulfilling his engagement with the Duke of Urbino, he declined the honour; at the same time stating the circumstances of his contract. His Holiness grew angry, and said, "What I have been desirous

[m] *Condivi*, sect. xlix. [n] *Guicciardini*, lib. xx.

[o] His election took place on the 12th of October, 1534.

of doing these thirty years, now I am Pope I cannot accomplish.—Where is this contract? I'll tear it." Michel Angelo explained; and having already suffered so much from the importunity and even threats of the Duke of Urbino, he was now determined not to yield, or change the direction of his pursuit. Some time before the death of Clement VII. he had serious thoughts of residing in Urbino, that he might be retired, and employed a person to buy him a house and a small estate in that dutchy; but fearing the power of the Pope, he hesitated. This restraint, for a series of years, was a constant source of embarrassment and vexation; and a letter from his friend, the celebrated Annibale Caro to Antonio Gallo, at Urbino, upon this subject, is interesting.

To ANTONIO GALLO.

"I DID not answer your letter on Saturday, expecting the publication of the Life of Michel Angelo I spoke to you of, written by one of his scholars[p], in which the affair of the monument is mentioned, and his justification discussed. You will see what he says, and if it should appear that there is enough to support his cause, have the goodness to submit it to his excellency, with any thing more you may think necessary to be added, and with the respect due to such a

[p] The work here alluded to is not known, as from various circumstances Condivi could not be the author referred to.

prince as the Duke of Urbino. But I will not ground his cause entirely upon its justice, as in strictness he might be found fault with in many particulars: the instances his Excellency has alledged against him to you, are just, and perhaps in part cannot be replied to, I would therefore ask such pardon and remission as would become the great to offer to men of genius, such as Michel Angelo. Although the Popes prevented his finishing the monument he engaged to execute, he ought to do another: his error I am ready to allow to a certain degree, which he also admits. As he is willing to take up his residence in the Dutchy of Urbino, the Duke might gain him over to himself, and by preserving him as much as possible be a benefactor to our age; and I am confident to be in disgrace with his Excellency impresses him with great concern, and might alone be the occasion of shortening his days. Exclusive of the reasons that might be alledged in his favour, I entreat his pardon on another ground, that in being the means of prolonging the life of this singular man, his Lordship may exercise that noble generosity which he displays on all occasions, and by so doing, at once render the greatest consolation to Michel Angelo, and attach him to himself for ever; which appears to me no trifling acquisition, as he possesses a robust old age, and may yet produce works worthy of posterity.

" My commiseration for an old man, and my desire that his Excellency should gain this credit, has induced me thus to express myself: what remains I submit to your generosity

and your prudence. For the kindness you have shewn in this affair, as well as your goodness towards me in all my own concerns, I give you my most sincere thanks; and though I feel my own inability to make a return, I intreat you to give me an opportunity to render you my services.—

" Of the death of the unfortunate Duke Orazio, besides the grief I feel for his loss, God only knows how much it is increased by my compassion for the excellent lady your Dutchess; and if you should think my condolence not an intrusion, I beg you would communicate my sorrow, and sympathize in the bitterness of her affliction; and may the consolation of Divine Providence be added to yours and to mine. Every blessing attend you [q].

ANNIBALE CARO."

Rome, Aug. 20, 1535.

The Duke having been irritated, and Paul III. equally intractable, Michel Angelo determined upon leaving Rome, and taking up his residence in Genoa, at an abbey belonging to his particular friend the Bishop of Aleria, commodiously situated, and where marble might be easily brought by sea

[q] *Lettere Pittoriche*, vol. iii. xci. The letter in the work here cited is dated 1553, which I suspect to be a mistake of the press, probably for 1535, as the monument was completed in the pontificate of Paul III. and the first edition of Vasari published 1550, and Condivi's Life of Michel Angelo, before the date of this letter, who says, La quale, oggi si vede in S. Pietro ad Vincula. " The monument is now to be seen in St. Pietro in Vincula."

from the quarries of Carrara. Whether the Pope knew of this arrangement is not certain, but within a few days he made him a visit at his house, accompanied by ten cardinals, and Michel Angelo shewed him the Cartoons for the Last Judgment, the sculpture which was prepared for the monument, and such other studies as happened to be in his house. The Cardinal de Mantova, on seeing the statue of Moses executed for the original design, exclaimed, "This statue alone is enough to honour the tomb of Julius[r]!" After the Pope had seen every thing, and bestowed the highest praise, he renewed his application. Michel Angelo however retreated from his solicitation. The Cardinal de Mantova, feeling the cause of this reluctance, said, he would engage for the Duke of Urbino to be satisfied with three statues from his own hand instead of six, and the other three executed by any sculptor he might appoint. This gave rise to a new engagement with the Duke, who not being willing to disoblige the Pope, acceded to this fourth agreement, which fortunately was the last; and after changing the design three times, the task was completed without further interruption, and Michel Angelo continued to reside at Rome.

The monument was not afterwards placed in St. Peter's as originally intended, but in the church of S. Pietro in Vincoli, which gave to Julius his nominal claim to the purple previous to his being advanced to the honours of the Tiara. The monument consists of seven statues, including the statue

[r] *Condivi*, sect. LI.

of the Pope himself, who is represented lying on a sarcophagus: below which, in recesses, are the three figures executed by Michel Angelo. In the middle, the celebrated statue of Moses; and on the two sides, in niches, two female figures, according to Vasari intended to personify Leah, the daughter of Laban, as emblematical of active life; and her sister Rachel, as emblematical of contemplative life, who is looking up in the act of adoration with clasped hands and one knee bent. Over the sarcophagus, in three niches, are the statues of a Prophet, a Sibyl, and a Madonna with an infant Christ in her arms, executed by a sculptor of the name of Raffaello da Monte Lupo [s]; the figure of the Pope on the sarcophagus was made by a person whom Vasari calls Maso dal Bosco [t]. These figures are all composed with

[s] The following letter by Michel Angelo to his bankers Messrs. Silvestro and Co. serves to authenticate his engagement with Raffaello da Monte Lupo.

TO M. SILVESTRO DA MONTAUTO AND CO.

"For the payment of the three statues of marble executed by Raffaello da Monte Lupo, there yet remains one hundred and seventy crowns in money of ten giuli each. When these three statues, which are larger than nature, representing a Prophet, a Sibyl, and a Madonna with an infant in her arms, shall be completed and placed in the church of St. Pietro in Vincula, making a part of the monument of Julius II. you may pay him at his pleasure for his final discharge, the beforementioned sum of one hundred and seventy crowns, as he will then have fulfilled all the conditions of his engagement.

Your's,

Rome. MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI."

(Let. I.)

The whole sum Raffaello da Monte Lupo received, was one thousand five hundred and eighty ducats.

[t] Maso dal Bosco is supposed to be Maso Boscoli, of Fiesole, who was a scholar of Andria Contucci, and executed many works in Rome, in Florence, and in other places.

ornamental architecture in a bad taste[u]. In this monument no part exists of the original composition but the statue of Moses. Two other figures were executed for it, which are now in Paris, in the Musée des Monumens Français[x]; they represent two of the slaves, or prisoners, as Vasari calls them, which were to have surrounded the base of the mausoleum.

As there now remained no objection to Michel Angelo's devoting his time to the service of the Pope, he commenced painting the great work of the Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel. According to Vasari it would appear that the Cartoon was begun about nine months before the death of

Vide Vasari Vita del Contucci, e Abecedario Pittorico. The statue of the Madonna over the figure of Julius, Vasari says was executed by one Scherano da Settignano, after Michel Angelo's model; but from the letter just cited, it is most probable that Vasari was misinformed.

[u] There are several prints of this monument, but the earliest I have seen was published in Rome, by Antonia Salamanca, in the year 1554.

[x] These statues were given by Michel Angelo to Robert Strozzi, and by him to Francis I. who afterwards gave them to the Constable Montmorency. In the reign of Louis XIII. Cardinal Richelieu made himself master of them, and placed them in his château; when they descended to the Marshal Richelieu, he removed them to Paris and placed them in his garden. After his death his widow removed them to a house she inhabited in the Fauxbourg de Roule; when she left that residence they were neglected, and put into the stables with other pieces of sculpture, and in the year 1793 on being put up to sale by brokers, M. Lenoir, the founder of the Musèe des Monumens Français, interfered in behalf of the nation, and through his means they remain in that repository.

Clement VII[r]. and from a letter still existing, written by Michel Angelo himself to Pietro Aretino, he had not entirely finished the composition in the year 1537, two years after the decease of that Pontiff, although he was then advancing it in fresco.

To PIETRO ARETINO.

" MAGNIFICENT Messer Pietro, my Lord and Brother, your letter, which I have received, has given me both pleasure and pain at the same time: it gave me pleasure, because it came from you whom I esteem unique in virtù; and pain, that I had finished the greater part of my composition, and could not adopt your ideas of the Day of Judgment, which are so well conceived, that had the event taken place, and yourself been present, you could not have described it better.

" Now to answer you with respect to writing about me, I am not only pleased with it, but I beg you to do it, since Kings and Emperors are gratified in being noticed by your pen. In this case, if I have any thing that can be of ser-

[r] Penò a condurre quest' opera otto anni, e la scoperse l'anno 1541 (credo io) il giorno di Natale. *Vasari*, tom. iii. p. 259.

vice to you, I offer it with all my heart. Finally, in regard to your not coming to Rome, do put yourself to any inconvenience for the sake of seeing the picture I am about, as that would be buying the gratification at more than it is worth. Farewel [z].

"MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI."

Whatever may have been the precise date of the commencement of this picture, it was finished in the year 1541, and the Chapel opened on Christmas day. Persons are described to have come from the most distant parts of Italy to see it, and the Public and the Court were rivals in admiration, which must have been peculiarly grateful to Michel Angelo, not only from that pleasure common to all men who are conscious of deserving well, and having those claims allowed, but in succeeding to give the Pope entire satisfaction, who, in the first year of his pontificate, liberally provided him with a pension for his life of six hundred pounds a year, to enable him to prosecute the undertaking to his own satisfaction [a].

[z] Let. II. This letter is published without any date, but the one to which it is an answer is dated Sept. 15, 1537. *V. Lettere Pittoriche*, tom. iii. let. xxii.

[a] Brief of Paul III. to Michel Angelo Buonarroti.

"Clement VII. our immediate predecessor of happy memory, wishing to remunerate you for the fresco picture representing the Last Judgment in our Chapel, in consideration of your labour and ability, which is an honour to our age, and the same being also our pleasure, we promised you, and do now promise by these presents, the annual rent of one thousand two hundred golden crowns during your life, the better to

The composition of this picture, in its general design, is conformable to the doctrines and tenets of the Christian faith. Angels are represented as sounding trumpets, the dead as rising from the grave and ascending to be judged by their Redeemer, who, accompanied by the Virgin Mary, stands surrounded by martyred saints. On his right and left are groups of both sexes, who, having passed their trial, are supposed to be admitted into eternal happiness. On the opposite side to the resurrection and ascension, are the con-

enable you to prosecute and finish the said work you have begun. With apostolic authority, and by virtue of these presents, we concede to you, during your life, the Pass of the Po at Piacenza, with the same emoluments, jurisdictions, honours, and employments, as were enjoyed during the lifetime of the late Gio. Francesco Burla, as one part of the said income, *i. e.* for six hundred golden crowns, which we understand to be the annual rent of the said Pass: our aforesaid promise remaining permanent respecting the other six hundred crowns. And we command our Vice Legate of Cispadana Gallia, and all such as may in future hold that office; and also our dearly beloved the Governor of the aforesaid City of Piacenza, and to all others whom it may concern; that they give to you, or to any one you may appoint, the possession of the said Pass, and the exercise of its rights, in such a manner that you may maintain and peaceably enjoy this our grant during your life, against whatever cause may operate to the contrary.

"Given in Rome, at St. Mark, September 1, 1535, in the first year of our pontificate." *Lettere Pittoriche*, vol. vi. p. 22.

From the words, 'in our chapel,' contained in the Brief, a doubt might arise with respect to the time when this picture was actually begun; but the confusion arises from the picture and the cartoon being occasionally spoken of as the same. Condivi, however, clearly tells us, that the painting in the chapel was not commenced until the pontificate of Paul III. "Ma tornando a Papa Paolo, dico, che dopo l'ultimo accordo fatto tra l'Eccellenza del Duca e Michelagnolo, pigliandolo al suo servizio, volta che mettesse ad essecuzione quelch' egli aveva cominciato al tempo di Clemente: e *gli fece dipingere* la facciata della Cappella di Sisto, la quale *egli aveva gia arricciata*, e *serrata con assiti*, da terra infino alla volta." *Condivi*, sect. xiii.

demned precipitated down to the regions of torment; and at the bottom is a fiend in a boat conducting them to the confines of perdition, where other fiends are ready to receive them. In two compartments at the top of the picture, made by the form of the vaulted ceiling, are groups of figures bearing the different insignia of the Passion [b].

Near to the Chapel of Sixtus, in the Vatican, Antonio da San. Gallo built another by the order of Paul III. which in like manner is called after its founder the Paoline Chapel; and the Pope being solicitous to render it more honourable to his name, desired Michel Angelo would paint the walls in fresco. Although he now began to feel he was an old man he undertook the commission, and on the sides opposite to each other painted two large pictures, representing the Martyrdom of St. Peter and the Conversion of St. Paul. These pictures, he said, cost him great fatigue, and in their progress declared himself sorry to find fresco painting was not an employment for his years [c]; he therefore petitioned his Holiness that Perino del Vaga might finish the ceiling from his designs, which was to have been decorated with painting and stucco ornaments; but this part of the work was not afterwards carried into execution.

[b] In the outline of the ceiling in the Appendix, the two vacant lunettes at the one end of the print are the spaces which are filled with the two groups alluded to; see the Last Judgment by Bartolozzi, in the Author's Essay and Illustration of that Picture, *Atlas folio.*

[c] *Vasari,* tom. iii. p. 260.

His Holiness often consulted Michel Angelo as an architect, although Antonio da San Gallo was the architect of St. Peter's, and promoted to that situation by his interest when Cardinal Farnese, and now employed in his private concerns. The Farnese palace in Rome was designed by S. Gallo, and the building advanced by him during his life; nevertheless Michel Angelo constructed the bold projecting cornice that surrounds the top in conjunction with him, at the express desire of the Pope. He also consulted Michel Angelo in fortifying the Borgo, and made designs for that purpose; but the discussion of this subject proved the cause of some enmity between these two rivals in the Pope's esteem [d].

In the year 1546, San Gallo died, and Michel Angelo was called upon to fill his situation as architect of St. Peter's; he at first declined that honour, but his Holiness laid his

[d] "Aveva Papa Paolo dato principio a fortificare Borgo, e condotto molti Signori con Antonio da Sangallo a questa dieta; dove volle che intervenisse ancora Michelagnolo, come quegli che sapeva che le fortificazioni fatte intorno al monte di San Miniato a Fiorenza erano state ordinate da lui; a dopo molte dispute, fu domandato del suo parere. Egli, che era d' opinione contraria al Sangallo e a molti altri, lo disse liberamente: dove il Sangallo gli disse, che era sua arte la scultura e pittura, non le fortificazioni. Rispose Michelagnolo che di quelle ne sapeva poco; ma che del fortificare, col pensiero che lungo tempo ci aveva avuto sopra, con la sperienza di quel che aveva fatto, gli pareva sapere più che non aveva saputo nè egli nè tutti que' di casa sua; mostrandogli in presenza di tutti che ci aveva fatto molti errori: e moltiplicando di quà, e di là le parole, il Papa ebbe a por silenzio, e non andò disegnata tutta la fortificazione di Borgo, che aperse gli occhi a tutto quello che s' è ordinato e fatto poi; e fu cagione che il portone di Santo Spirito, che era vicino al fine, ordinato dal Sangallo, rimase imperfetto." *Vasari*, tom. iii. p. 260.

commands upon him, which admitted neither of apology nor excuse; however he accepted the appointment upon these conditions, that he would receive no salary, and that it should be so expressed in the Patent, as he undertook the office purely from devotional feelings; and that, as hitherto the various persons employed in all the subordinate situations had only considered their own interest to the extreme prejudice of the undertaking, he should be empowered to discharge them, and appoint others in their stead; and lastly, that he should be permitted to make whatever alteration he chose in San Gallo's design, or entirely supply its place with what he might consider more simple, or in a better style. To these conditions his Holiness acceded, and the patent was made out accordingly [e].

The history of the building of St. Peter's presents a wide field of information, and I regret it is not within the limits of the present work to embrace that interesting subject [f]. The first stone was laid by Julius II. on the 18th of April, 1506, and Bramante was appointed sole architect. Upon his death, 1513, the appointment was conferred by Leo X. on Giuliano da San Gallo, Raffaello d'Urbino, and Giocondo da Verona. Giuliano being oppressed with age and infirmity, begged leave to decline the

[e] *Vide Bonanni Templi Vaticani Historia,* p. 61.

[f] Those who wish for information will find the works of Ferrabosco, Bonanni, and Fontana, the most interesting with the *Memorie istoriche. della gran Cupola,* by Sig. Marchese Gio. Poleni.

honour, and received permission to retire to Florence. Giocondo da Verona also quitted Rome soon after, and the whole charge devolved on Raffaello. Antonio da San Gallo, the nephew of Giuliano, solicited the place of his uncle, not as chief architect, which seems originally to have been his appointment, but to be an assistant to Raffaello: in this application he succeeded, and upon the death of Raffaello in 1520, the whole direction of the building was intrusted to his care. The designs of his predecessors were laid aside, and he substituted one more complicated; and although the work advanced very slowly for want of money, he made a model which of itself cost more than a thousand pounds sterling [g].

This model being more conformable to the principles of Saracenic than of Grecian or Roman architecture in the multiplicity and division of its parts, Michel Angelo applied himself to make an original design, upon a reduced scale, on the plan of a Greek cross [h]. This met with the Pope's approbation; for, although the dimensions were less, the form was more grand than that of San Gallo's model. It appears, from a letter by Michel Angelo still extant, that

[g] "This model was executed by one Antonio Labacco, of which the carpenters' work cost four thousand one hundred and eighty-four crowns." *Vasari Vita di Antonio da Sangallo*, vol. ii. p. 445.

[h] Bonanni has given his plan, elevation, and section, *Vide Templi Vaticani Historia*, tab. 14, 15, 16.

he had a high opinion of Bramante's general plan, and would most probably have adopted it with trifling alterations, if the difficulty of raising money had not made it appear necessary to contract the original size to meet the exigences of the times. Clement VII. left some jewels in the treasury, but no specie. The disaffection of Germany had considerably dried up in that quarter an important source of revenue; and Henry VIII. of England, to enrich himself and gratify his passions, had also withdrawn his allegiance from the established church; with these considerations Paul III. was desirous that such a plan might be adopted as to leave a reasonable hope of its being completed: with a similar view, though not from the failure of resources, but from the extravagance of their application, Leo X. commissioned Peruzzi to make a design to diminish the expence [i].

During the reign of Paul III. Michel Angelo was wholly employed in works of painting and architecture, excepting the two statues made for the monument of Julius II [k]. From the death of San Gallo the superintendence of the building was alone sufficient to occupy his time. Besides the direct advancement of that stupendous fabric he had

[i] *Vide Vasari Vita di Baldassarre Perazzi*, tom. ii. p. 197. *et Bonanni Templi Vaticani Historia*, tab. 13.

[k] According to Vasari these two statues were executed in less than a year, "le quali statue condusse di sua mano Michelagnolo in meno di un anno."

much to undo which was done by his predecessor, and to contend with a host of adverse interests; for, agreeable to one of the conditions of the patent, he chose his own workmen, and dismissed those who had been formerly employed; for which he shared the fate of all reformers, however good the intention, or beneficial the end, of being maliciously spoken of, hated, and constantly opposed.

The following letter, preserved in the family of Buonarroti, in Florence, will serve to shew the estimation in which Michel Angelo held the talents of Bramante, and the extent of masonry by his predecessor he wished to remove.

To M. BARTOLOMMEO.

"I CANNOT deny that Bramante was not as eminent an architect as any one that has appeared from the ancients down to our own times. He laid the foundation of St. Peter's not with confused ideas, but with a clear and luminous mind. Its isolated situation is such as not at all to injure or interfere with the palace, which was highly approved when the design was made, and the advantages are now obvious to every one.

"He who departs from the design of Bramante as San Gallo has done, must depart from fundamental principles;

which is evident if the model be seen with impartiality. In the first place, the circle San Gallo designed on the outside takes away all the light from Bramante's plan, which of itself, in this respect, is so deficient, that the recesses above and beneath the choirs are in total darkness, affording a secure retreat for assassins, and hiding-places for thieves and vagrants of every description, so that at the close of the evening when the church is to be shut, it would require five and twenty persons to hunt them out, and even then it might be attended with difficulty. There would be likewise this inconvenience in surrounding Bramante's design with this circle of San Gallo: the Cappella di Paolo [l], the Stanza del Piombo [m], the Rota [n], and many other places must necessarily be destroyed, nor do I think that the Sistine Chapel would entirely escape. Respecting the cost of what is already done, it is said to have amounted to a hundred thousand crowns; that however cannot be true, because it might have been done for sixty thousand; and if it were now to be taken down little loss would be incurred, as the foundations and materials could never come more opportunely, and the building would then be two hundred

[l] The Paoline Chapel built by Paul III.

[m] The chamber where the seals were affixed to the Pope's Bulls, which are made of lead.

[n] Where the auditors of the Rota used to meet.

crowns better, and acquire three hundred years of additional stability.

"This is my impartial and unprejudiced opinion, for in gaining a victory I shall be a great loser. If you will make this communication to his Holiness I shall be obliged to you, as I do not feel myself well [o].

"MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI."

Notwithstanding many impediments thrown in his way, this splendid edifice advanced with considerable activity, and before the end of the pontificate of Paul III. it began to assume its general form and character; for the Pope had the highest estimation of Michel Angelo's abilities, and implicit confidence in his integrity. This great undertaking, which might reasonably be supposed more than sufficient for the attention of an old man, was however only a part of his extensive engagements. He was commissioned to carry on the building of the Farnese Palace left unfinished by the death of San Gallo; and employed to build a palace on the Capitoline hill for the Senator of Rome, two galleries for the reception of Sculpture and Pictures, and also to ornament this celebrated site with antique statues and relics

[o] Let. III.

of antiquity, from time to time dug up and discovered in Rome and its environs.

These buildings form the three sides of a square, and the principal entrance on the fourth is defined by balustrades with statues and fragments of antiquity; in the centre of the square is the celebrated bronze statue of Marcus Aurelius discovered in the pontificate of Sixtus IV. and then placed before the church of S. Gio. in Laterano, but now removed into this situation by Michel Angelo, and mounted on a pedestal[p]. At this time he also made a flight of steps leading up to the church of the Convent of the Araceli, situated on the highest part of the hill, where anciently stood the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, and where there are now some columns supposed to have made a part of it. It was in this church that the bare-footed Franciscans were singing vespers, when Gibbon, musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, first thought of writing the decline and fall of Rome.

As men are generally malevolent in proportion to the disappointment of their mischievous hopes, so the enemies of Michel Angelo grew inveterate from the ill success of their opposition; and to all those who could have any influence in injuring his reputation, they did not fail to use exertions to represent him as an unworthy successor of San

[p] This equestrian statue originally stood before the Temple of M. A. Antoninus Faustina.

Gallo. Upon the death of Paul III [p]. an effort was made to remove him from his situation, but Julius III. who succeeded to the pontificate, was not less favourably disposed towards him than his predecessor; however they presented a memorial, petitioning the Pope to hold a committee of architects in St. Peter's at Rome, to convince his Holiness that their accusations and complaints were not unfounded. At the head of this party was Cardinal Salviati, nephew to Leo X. and Cardinal Marcello Cervino, who was afterwards Pope by the title of Marcellus II. Julius agreed to the investigation, Michel Angelo was formally arraigned, and the Pope gave his personal attendance. The complainants stated, that the church wanted light, and the architects had previously furnished the two Cardinals with a particular example to prove the basis of the general position, which was, that he had walled up a

[p] Paul III. died on the 10th of November, 1549, after a pontificate of fifteen years and twenty-eight days. Among the most remarkable acts of his reign is the excommunication of Henry VIII. who was declared to be deprived of his crown and kingdom, his subjects absolved from all obedience, all acts of religion interdicted or forbidden to be performed or celebrated in his dominions, commanding all ecclesiastical persons to depart from his kingdoms, and the nobles to rise up in rebellion against him. This Bull is dated the 30th of August, 1535. It was in the reign of this Pope, in the year 1540, that the Jesuits were established, and the plan of that extraordinary society confirmed; and on the first of November, in the year 1542, the celebrated Council of Trent met to establish the truth of the Gospel, to convince all men of transubstantiation, to prevent the further diminution of the Papal authority, and endeavour to do that which is always impossible, reconcile the jarring opinions of contending interests.

recess for three chapels, and made only three insufficient windows; upon which the Pope asked Michel Angelo to give his reasons for having done so: he replied, "I should wish first to hear the deputies." Cardinal Marcello immediately said for himself and Cardinal Salviati, "We ourselves are the deputies." Then said Michel Angelo, "In the part of the church alluded to, over those windows are to be placed three others." "You never said that before," replied the Cardinal: to which he answered with some warmth, "I am not, neither will I ever be obliged to tell your Eminence, or any one else, what I ought or am disposed to do; it is your office to see that the money be provided, to take care of the thieves, and to leave the building of St. Peter's to me. Turning to the Pope—Holy Father, you see what I gain: if these machinations to which I am exposed are not for my spiritual welfare, I lose both my labour and my time." The Pope replied, putting his hands upon his shoulders, "Do not doubt, your gain is now and will be hereafter;" and at the same time gave him assurance of his confidence and esteem.

Julius prosecuted no work in architecture or sculpture without consulting him. What was done in the Vatican, or in his Villa on the Flaminian Way, called La Vigna di Papa Giulio, was with Michel Angelo's advice and superintendance; he also made him a design for a palace to be built adjoining to the church of St. Rocco; but unfortu-

nately it was not carried into execution, and the drawings are lost [q].

Among the numerous avocations that occupied the attention of Michel Angelo in the pontificate of Paul III. he was

[q] Michel Angelo at this time was consulted about building a chapel in St. Pietro Montorio, to receive two monuments for Cardinal di Monte, the uncle of Julius III. and Messer Fabbiano his grandfather. The commission for these monuments, as well as the building of the chapel, was given to Vasari; but Michel Angelo was referred to, to determine the price, and to recommend sculptors to execute the models in marble.

Vasari being much employed in Florence by the Grand Duke Cosmo I. in his absence from Rome, Michel Angelo negotiated the business, and the two following letters were written by him to Vasari upon that subject.

MY DEAR GEORGIO,

CONCERNING the building of the chapel in St. Pietro in Montorio, as the Pope will not trouble himself about it, I did not write to you, knowing that you were informed of what was doing by your agent. Now, I have occasion to tell you what follows. Yesterday morning the Pope having gone to Montorio, sent for me, and I met him on the bridge as he was returning. I had a long conversation with him about the intended monuments, and at last he said to me, he was resolved not to have them put there, but to be placed in the church de' Fiorentini; asking me what I thought of that plan? I said that I approved of it much; reflecting, that from this circumstance the church itself would stand a chance of being finished. For your three letters which I have received, I have no pen to answer them with such high compliments; but if I could hope in any degree to merit such, it were only that you might have a friend worthy of your commendation. But I am not surprised, as you raise men from the dead, that you should lengthen life to the living, or consign the worthless to eternal death; to make short; such as I am, I am entirely yours.

Rome, Aug. 1, 1550. MICHELAGNOLO BUONARROTI.

(Let. IV.)

MY DEAR GEORGIO,

IMMEDIATELY Bartolommeo arrived here I went to the Pope, and perceiving that he was determined to rebuild the chapel in Montorio for the

employed to rebuild a bridge across the Tiber, where the Pons Palatinus anciently stood, of which a considerable part was finished, and all the materials provided. The party which was not able to remove him from his situation in St. Peter's, now used their influence, not by finding fault, but by praising his great abilities, and commiserating his age; and from a kindness that proceeds from wishing better to ourselves than our friends, they were desirous to relieve him from his charge. As this hypocrisy was artfully managed, and Michel Angelo little disposed to contend with the faction, he receded; and the completion of the bridge was given to one Nanni di Baccio Bigio, a man wholly incompetent to the undertaking; and, agreeable to Michel Angelo's prediction, in five years was washed away by a flood, and from that time has remained a ruin, now called Ponte Rotto. Not to press too hard upon sinister views, favours may be sometimes granted with little inconveni-

monuments, I provided him with a mason from St. Peter's. M. *Busibody* * knew it, and, after his way, was desirous of sending one of his own choosing. Not to contend with him who gives motion to the winds, I drew back; for being a man but of little weight, I was willing to keep free from blame. However it appears to me, that the church de' Fiorentini is not to be thought of any more. Nothing more occurs at present; remain well, and return soon.

October 13, 1550. MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI.

(Let. V.)

* This person whom M. A. always mentions by the epithet *Tantecose*, was Pier Giovanni Aliotti, Groom of the Stole to Paul III. and afterwards Bishop of Forli.

venience to unmerited claims; but when a pharos or a bridge is to be built, he who furnishes bad materials, or lends his aid to promote insufficient men, deserves the censure of all mankind.

Of the numerous friends and patrons of Michel Angelo, no one was ever more sincerely attached to him than Julius III. His Holiness used to say, that if it were possible, he would most willingly take upon himself his years, that the world might have a better chance of not being so soon deprived of a great man; and in the beginning of his pontificate he told him, at a public audience, that if he died before himself he should be embalmed and kept in his own palace, that his body might be permanent as his works were immortal[r].

[r] It was at the particular desire of this Pope that Condivi wrote a life of Michel Angelo, published in the third year of his pontificate, and the preface may not be uninteresting, as it serves to shew the high sense he entertained of his virtue and his talents, and the interest he felt in honouring his name.

DEDICATORIA P. SANTO.

" I SHOULD not dare, unworthy servant, and of so humble fortune as I am, to appear before your Holiness, if my unworthiness had not been previously dispensed with when you were pleased to invite me into your presence, and encourage me with expressions that gave me confidence and hope above my condition or my merit, by which I feel myself to be more than I am, and have followed my studies and the discipline of my beloved master with so much fervour, encouraged by your Holiness, that I have been able to perform works with a hope of gathering fruit, which, if not known to futurity, may perhaps merit the grace and favour of your Holiness, and make me worthy of considering myself a servant and disciple of Michel Angelo Buonarroti; the one the Prince of Christianity, and the other the Prince of the Arts of Design; and to give

The position agreeable to the laws of probability which leaves to the older man the shortest time to live, met with an exception in this instance; for in the year 1555 the Pope died, after a short reign of five years; and perhaps it would have been happier for Michel Angelo if they had ended their days together, for he was now eighty-one years of age, and although several years yet remained to him, they were afterwards chequered with vexation and trouble.

Cosmo, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, frequently solicited his return to Florence to superintend the public works, and direct the completion of those he himself had begun in the reign of Clement VII. By his desire he was now employed in Rome in building a church for the Florentines, the designs of which had been submitted to his Excellency on a former occasion with the following letter.

your Holiness an humble essay of what your benignity has produced in me, as to you I have dedicated my soul and my devotion for ever, so to your Holiness I will dedicate from time to time all the works that I may produce, and this especially of the Life of Michel Angelo, presuming that it may be acceptable to you, *since the virtue and the excellence of this man your Holiness has recommended me to imitate.* This is as much as is needful for me to say of him. To us greater things remain than we have derived, which shall be published for the establishment of the arts and their utmost refinement, and for the glory of your Holiness, who patronises and protects both arts and artists. In the mean time I supplicate to be permitted to offer this my first work to your Holiness, with which I humbly bow to your most holy feet.

" Most unworthy servant,

" ASCANIO CONDIVI."

To COSMO I. DUKE *of* FLORENCE.

" Most illustrious Lord and Duke of Florence,

" THE Florentines having had the greatest desire to build a church in Rome to be dedicated to St. George: now, under the auspices of your Lordship, having greater hope of fulfilling that desire, have resolved upon the undertaking, and appointed a committee of five persons to carry it into effect, who have several times applied to me for a design; but knowing that Pope Leo X. had begun the church, I answered them I could not attend to their solicitation without the permission of the Duke of Florence. Having now received your Lordship's gracious letter, which I consider as an express command to attend to this building, I shall do it with the greatest pleasure. I have already made several designs[1], among which the committee has chosen

[1] Michel Angelo made five designs for this church, and a person of the name of Tiberio, a young architect, made a correct drawing of the one which was approved, and afterwards a model in wood under Michel Angelo's inspection. This model Bottari remembers to have seen in a room belonging to the church of S. Giorgio de' Fiorentini, although much injured; but at the time he published his edition of Vasari (1759) it was no longer in existence, and he says it was believed to have been burnt by the priests. There is a print of the plan of this church, though not commonly to be met with. *N. dell' Ed. di Roma.*

one which I will send to you, and shall execute it if it meets with your Lordship's approbation.

" It grieves me that I am far advanced in life, and that I so much feel the effects of old age as not to promise myself much in this edifice; but I will do for your Lordship, with a most willing mind, all the little that I can[t].

&c. &c. &c.

" MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI."

Cosmo being solicitous that the Lorenzo Library should be finished, sent a person of the name of Tribolo to solicit Michel Angelo's services in Florence; but the church of St. Peter's was an object that too much occupied his attention to induce him to leave Rome. The Duke then desired Vasari to obtain information from him how the materials, already hewn, might be applied to their original purpose; to which application he wrote to Vasari—

" MY DEAR GEORGIO,

" ABOUT the staircase of the library, of which so much has been said, believe me, if I could recollect the original design I should require no intreaty to do it. A certain staircase I do indeed remember as a dream, but I

[t] Let. VI.

do not believe I can at all recollect how it was originally intended, because what now occurs to me concerning it, is, that it was an ill judged thing. However I will do my best to recall it to my mind. I took a quantity of cases of an oval shape, each one palm[t] deep, but not of one width or length, and the largest was placed on the pavement at an equal distance from the door and the wall, the height of the step was discretional; another was placed upon this so much less every way, that from the first you might ascend as gradually as you pleased, each diminishing and receding up to the door; a part of this oval staircase, on each side, had as it were two wings, with steps of the same gradation but not oval, that the middle might serve for *il Signore*, and the return of the wings curved to the wall. From the division or landing-place halfway up, the staircase was to detach itself from the wall about three palms, so that the floor might not be broken in upon, and every side remain free. I am afraid my description is only fit to be laughed at, nevertheless you may perhaps find in it something to your purpose[u].

"MICHELAGNOLO BUONARROTI."

Rome, Sept. 28, 1555.

(Let. VII.)

[t] A palm is a Roman measure equal to 8.779 English inches.

[u] See a plan, elevation, and sections, of this Library, given by Giuseppe Ignazio Rossi, published in Florence 1739, in folio, entitled, La Libreria Mediceo-Laurenziana Architettura di Michelagnolo Bonarroti.

Cardinal Marcello being chosen Pope in the room of Julius III. all hope ceased of Michel Angelo being continued as the architect of St. Peter's. Upon this election the Duke therefore immediately renewed his invitation: he wrote a letter to him with his own hand, and sent it express by one of the officers of his household. From the present posture of affairs he began seriously to think of quitting Rome and avail himself of the Duke's kindness; but Marcellus II. dying in the same month he was advanced to the pontificate, the new election of Paul IV. made a change in the aspect of affairs, and he was requested to continue in his office. From the desire he had to promote the undertaking, and his health not being very good, he wrote to the Duke to excuse himself; at the same time sent the following letter to Vasari, who was then at Florence.

" MY DEAR GEORGIO,

" I CALL God to witness how contrary it was to my inclination ten years ago[x] to undertake the building of St. Peter's, forced upon me by Pope Paul III. Yet if

[x] San Gallo died October 1546; this letter was consequently written in the year 1556.

the work had been continued from that time until now with the same earnestness as it was then going on, the fabric would have been mad: what now I should have had pleasure in returning to; but for the want of money it advanced very slowly, and still more so as the parts were laborious and difficult to execute; so that to abandon the undertaking now, would not only be in the highest degree disgraceful, but the loss of my labour for these ten years past, which I have prosecuted with a religious zeal. Thus much have I said in answer to your letter. I have also received one from the Duke, giving me an unexpected pleasure by his condescension and politeness; for which I return to God and to his Highness all the thanks I am able to bestow. I perceive that I depart from my subject, but I have lost my memory, and it is both difficult and troublesome to me to write, for it is not my art. The conclusion however is this, to make you understand what will necessarily follow from my giving up St. Peter's and leaving my residence here: in the first place, it would gratify a nest of thieves, the building itself would stand a chance of being ruined, and besides, I myself perhaps may be shut up in a prison for the remainder of my life[7].

"MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI."

[7] Let. VIII.

In the course of Michel Angelo's correspondence with the Grand Duke and his agents, he gave his Excellency to understand that he should be happy to return to Florence, when a favourable opportunity arrived that he could leave his weighty engagement in Rome with safety to the care of others. But in concerns of magnitude, the day of repose is often a flattering phantom that only cheers the way to continued toil; and with men of genius and enlivened imagination, expectation is rarely grasped by human activity. The Duke made his calculations agreeable to his wishes and his hopes, and as Michel Angelo did not conform to them, he expressed his dissatisfaction to the Senator Buonarroti; upon which occasion Michel Angelo wrote this letter to his nephew to explain the misunderstanding.

To MESSER LIONARDO BUONARROTI.

" I WOULD prefer death rather than be in disgrace with the Duke. In all my affairs I have constantly endeavoured to adhere to the truth, and if I have delayed coming to Florence as I promised, I have always meant that it should be understood with this condition, not to depart from hence till I had so far advanced the fabric of St. Peter's as to prevent its being spoiled by others, my composition altered, or to leave opportunity for those thieves to

return and plunder, as they have been accustomed to do, and as they still expect. Being placed in this situation by Divine Providence, I have used my utmost diligence to prevent these evils. I have not yet, however, been able to succeed in advancing the building to that point which I desire, for the want of money and men, and being old, and not having any one else to whose care I could leave the undertaking; and as I serve for the love of God, in whom is all my hope, I have not been willing to abandon it.

"MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI."

Rome, July 1, 1557[z].

The high respect the Duke had for Michel Angelo's talents, and consideration for the circumstances in which he was placed, diminished the effects of disappointment; for when esteem is real, it is easier to find motives of reconciliation, than cherish distorted feelings to widen a breach of separation.

Paul IV. commenced his pontificate with two determined objects in view: to be revenged on his enemies by the sword, and to reform the church with the scourge of the Inquisition, established through his influence in the reign of Paul III. Implacable hatred rankled in his heart against the Viceroy

[z] Let. IX.

of Naples for having suspended him from the exercise of his functions as Archbishop of Brundusium, in consequence of his political interference in favour of France. Against Spain he was inveterate from the injury his family sustained in the sackage of Rome in the year 1527. With these feelings and disposition the arts made no part of his study or amusement, and were now no part of his consideration. The building of St. Peter's proceeded as a work of course, and Michel Angelo continued in his situation, as necessary to its advancement; but as war had been a previous determination, the taking care to strengthen the fortifications of Rome was an object more immediately within his views; and although in this work Michel Angelo appears to have been consulted, yet Salusti Peruzzi was principally employed in the undertaking.

With a hope of uniting the kingdom of Naples to the State of the Church and punishing the Viceroy, he immediately declared himself hostile to the Spanish government, protesting against the legality of its claim to *oppress* the Neapolitans, whom he excited to rebellion, and subsidized France to second his views. Michel Angelo knowing enough of the consequences of war, and but little disposed to co-operate or to be inconvenienced by its effects, sought retirement for a short time in a monastery in the mountains of Spoleto, while the French troops were in the Ecclesiastical State. In this retirement he received a book presented to him by Messer Cosmo Bartoli through the hands of Vasari, to whom

he wrote a letter of thanks after his return to Rome, which shews his regret at leaving his monastic friends.

MY DEAR GIORGIO,

I HAVE received M. Cosmo's little book[a], and in this I inclose a letter of thanks, which I will trouble you to deliver with my respects.

I have lately been put to great inconvenience and expence, but I have likewise had a great deal of pleasure in visiting the Monks in the mountains of Spoleto: indeed, though I have now returned to Rome, I have left the better half of myself with them; for in these troublesome times, to say the truth, there is no happiness but in such retirement. I have nothing more to tell you, but that I am glad you have good health, and that you enjoy it. Farewell.

MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI.

September 18, 1556[b].

[a] This book was entitled, *Defesa della lingua Fiorentina et di Dante con le regole di far bella e numerosa la prosa.* It is principally a defence of Dante and the Florentine language, as expressed in the title, against certain criticisms of Bembo, Bernardino, Tomitano, and some others. It was begun by Lenzoni, and finished by Pier Francesco Giambullari, and in consequence of his death left to Cosmo Bartoli to print, who published the work in 4to, 1556, dedicated to Cosmo I.

[b] Let. X.

On his return to Rome he principally employed himself on a group of Sculpture, which he meditated for an Altar-picce to honour the chapel which should be the place of his own interment. The subject was a dead Christ taken down from the Cross, and supported by the Virgin Mary assisted by Nicodemus and Mary Magdalen. This group for many years was the amusement of his leisure hours; but the marble being unfavourable for his purpose, and himself fastidious to please, he at length grew impatient and laid it aside: the group, however, in its unfinished and imperfect state, is preserved in the Cathedral of Florence.

To assist Michel Angelo in the great work of St. Peter's, Paul IV. took into his service Pirro Ligorio, an architect better known by his designs and the books he published on architecture, than by the buildings he had constructed. This person was no sooner employed than he began to alter Michel Angelo's plans and adopt his own, at the same time treating him with the greatest disrespect, as an old man in his second childhood, no longer worthy of being consulted. This impertinence, added to the vexation he continually experienced from the faction always operating to remove him from his situation, so disgusted him that he was determined to be relieved from his partner, or resign; he therefore immediately represented the affair to the Pope, requesting to know which of the two architects his Holiness preferred; upon which Ligorio was dismissed. In this advanced period of his life, the only

desire he had to continue in his situation was to establish his design beyond the possibility of change. Upon this occasion he wrote to Vasari at Florence, expressing his feelings to that effect, accompanied by a sonnet, as a specimen of the mode he adopted to amuse himself, according to the opinion of his adversary, the best adapted to the impaired state of his mind.

To VASARI.

"IT is the will of God that I still continue to be; and I know that I shall be justly called foolish and out of my mind for making sonnets; but as many say I am in my second childhood, I am willing to employ myself agreeably to my state. By yours I feel conscious of the love you bear me, therefore I wish you to know, that it is my filial desire to rest these my feeble bones by the side of those of my Father, and I pray you to see that it be done.

"For me to leave this place would be the cause of great ruin to the church of St. Peter's, which would be a great pity and a greater sin; as it may be established beyond the possibility of changing the design, I hope first to accomplish that end, if I do not already commit a crime by disappointing the many cormorants who are in daily expectation of getting rid of me."

"MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI."

(Let. XI.)

SONNET.

" Well-nigh the voyage now is overpast,
And my frail bark, through troubled seas and rude,
Draws near that common haven where at last
Of every action, be it evil or good,
Must due account be rendered. Well I know
How vain will then appear that favoured art,
Sole Idol long and Monarch of my heart,
For all is vain that man desires below.
And now remorseful thoughts the past upbraid,
And fear of twofold death my soul alarms,
That which must come, and that beyond the grave;
Picture and Sculpture lose their feeble charms,
And to that Love Divine I turn for aid
Who from the Cross extends his arms to save [c]."

Michel Angelo had now advanced the church of St. Peter's to the base of the cupola, and here he paused to consider what kind of dome would be best adapted to the general design, and of the best mode to construct it; at length, after the lapse of some months, he made a small model in clay, which, when he had satisfied his mind, was executed

[c] CXIX.

in wood under his direction to a scale, with the utmost accuracy; but many causes contributed to retard the progress of the building; the want of money, and the different views of successive sovereigns, whose average reign was not eight years from the commencement to the completion of the church.

About this time Paul IV. died, a source of tumultuous joy to the Roman people, and to Michel Angelo of less regret than that of any former Pope: one of the first acts of whose pontificate was to deprive him of the chancellorship of Rimini, without assigning any cause; and the Last Judgment, in the Sistine Chapel, narrowly escaped from destruction by his monastic views of human life. In the commencement of his reign he conceived a notion of *reforming* that picture, in which so many academical figures offended his sense of propriety. This was communicated to Michel Angelo, who desired that the Pope might be told from himself, that what he wished was very little, and might be easily effected; for if his Holiness would only reform the opinions of mankind, the picture would be reformed of itself. This mode of reasoning gave the Pope but little satisfaction, for he afterwards resolved to destroy it altogether, and was prevented with great difficulty by those Cardinals who influenced his councils: they represented that it would be a crime to whitewash the wall, and that his objections might be easily removed by painting over those parts only which appeared to be improper; and, by their

advice, Daniello da Volterra was employed, and the picture saved[d]. In the character of this Pope it is infinitely more interesting for Englishmen to know, that to his inquisitorial and persecuting spirit, the reign of Queen Mary owes more of its violence than to her unhappy temper, the weakness of her understanding, or the bigotry of her disposition.

Paul IV. was succeeded by Pius IV. of the house of Medici, Michel Angelo continued as architect of St. Peter's, and part of the revenue of the chancellorship of Rimini was restored to him. By the desire of this Pope he made a design for a monument for the Marquis Marignano, his brother, to be placed in the Cathedral in Milan, which was executed by a sculptor of reputation, Lione Lioni Aretino. He also made three designs for one of the gates of the city of Rome, and that was selected which could be executed at the least expence, and in honour of the Pope was called Porta Pia: a work extravagantly praised by Vasari and others, but I fear those who judge without referance to a name will find in it but little to commend. From this specimen, however, the Pope was desirous to rebuild the other gates of the city, for which Michel Angelo made

[d] From this employment Daniello da Volterra was afterwards called *Il Braghettone*, as would appear from the Memoirs of Gaspero Celio. This little book, entitled, *Memoria fatta del Signor Gaspero Celio, &c.* printed at Naples in 1638, 12°. is extremely rare.

a number of designs, but it does not appear that any of them were executed. The façade of the Porta del Popolo, fronting the Via Appia, has been vaguely attributed to Michel Angelo, but with little probability [e].

The Pope was desirous of converting the ruined Baths of Dioclesian into a Christian church for the accommodation of the adjoining Carthusian Monastery, and Michel Angelo was appointed architect for that purpose. The undertaking was carried into effect with great credit; and the interior of this church exhibits a striking example of the impression which can be produced by simplicity of form and grandeur of dimension [f]. Michel Angelo was also employed by the Cardinal Santa Fiore to build a chapel in S. Maria Maggiore, but which remained unfinished in consequence of the

[e] Bottari ascribes this gate to Vignola, from the style of Architecture, and from its being erected in the pontificate of Pio IV. when he was in high reputation and esteem. Whether this opinion be correct or not, it is entitled to respect.

[f] In England I have experienced a striking impression from a simple and unadorned room; not to make a comparison between it and S. Maria degli Angeli, I mention it for the sake of instancing an example of what may be obtained by simplicity and dimension without any other aid. The room is in Lancaster Castle, appropriated to the use of prisoners, who for slight offences are sentenced to a temporary confinement; it is about sixty-three feet long, having only four plain walls, and making nearly the proportion of a double cube, and is remarkably illustrative of the true feeling of the great first principles of architecture; which are of so much importance, that when they are once felt and understood, it is not afterwards easy to spoil the effect of grandeur, even by injudicious ornament or the caprice of fashion.

death of the Cardinal, and was afterwards terminated from the original designs by Giacomo della Porta[g].

During the prosecution of these works by Michel Angelo, the church of St. Peter was not neglected; but from the want of money it advanced slowly. The directors, who had ever been dissatisfied, exerted themselves once more to remove him from his situation; not from any thing that he did, or neglected to do, but because he could not enter into their views with their perspicacity. He was now very old, and saw that his greatest crime was that of having lived too long, and being thoroughly disgusted with the cabals, he was solicitous to resign, that his last days might not be tormented by the unprincipled exertions of a worthless faction; and the following letter to Cardinal di Carpi is an evidence of the state of his mind on that subject.

[g] The name of this Cardinal di S. Fiore was Guido Ascanio Sforza, chamberlain to the Pope. By some it has been doubted whether Michel Angelo designed this chapel; but Bottari has made the following quotation from *Il Ciacconio,* tom. iii. p. 566. to shew that this scepticism was without foundation. "S. Mariæ Majoris basilicæ archipresbyter præfuit, quo in templo nobile sacellum singulari artificio ex Michaelis Angeli Bonarotæ modulo in honorem Virginis Assumptæ construxit." This chapel had a superb façade, but it was destroyed by Benedict XIV. when he modernised the church for the sake of some uniformity of plan which was then adopted.

To the CARDINAL DI CARPI.

"MESSER Francesco Dandini informed me yesterday that your most illustrious and most reverend Lordship told him the building of St. Peter's could not possibly proceed worse than it did, which has truly given me much uneasiness, as your Eminence must have been misinformed. No one can or ought to be more desirous than myself that it should go on well; and, if I am not deceived, I can assure you with truth that, as far as the building has advanced, it could not have proceeded better: but, perhaps, I may be blinded by my own partiality, or deceived by my old age, and contrary to my intention done mischief, or stood in the way of being of the service that I ought. I intend, as soon as possible, to ask my dismission of his Holiness; nay, to save time, I even intreat your Eminence to liberate me from this vexatious employment, which, by the commands of the Popes, as you know, I gratuitously undertook seventeen years since, during which period I have given manifest proofs of my zeal in the prosecution of the work. To return, however, to the subject; I earnestly intreat that I may be permitted to resign, which would be conferring upon me the greatest favour; and with

the most respectful reverence I kiss the hands of your Eminence[z].

"MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI."

An object of the first importance to the Directors, was to make Nanni Biggio the chief architect. Michel Angelo himself receiving no salary for his labours, took care that no one was paid for that which he did not perform; and as it is usual, in public works, to derive much profit from supposititious or inadequate services, Biggio was the best man that could be selected to compensate for the heavy losses sustained by Michel Angelo's inflexibility.

By reason of his advanced age, the Bishop of Ferratino, who was a principal director, recommended him not to attend to the fatigue of his duty, but to nominate whomever he chose to supply his place. By this contrivance Michel Angelo willingly yielded to so courteous a proposition, and appointed Daniello da Volterra. As soon as this was effected it was made the basis of accusation against him for incapacity, which left the Directors the power of choosing a successor, who immediately superseded Daniello da Volterra, by appointing Nanni Biggio in his stead.

This was so palpable a trick, so untrue in principle, and so injurious in its tendency, that, in justice to himself, Michel Angelo thought it necessary to represent it to the Pope, at the same time requesting that it might be under-

[z] Let. XII.

stood there was nothing he more solicited than his dismission. His Holiness took up the discussion with interest, and begged he would not recede until he had made proper enquiry, and a day was immediately appointed for the Directors to meet him in the Araceli. They only stated, in general terms, that Michel Angelo was ruining the building, and that the measures they had taken were essentially necessary; but the Pope previously sent Il Signor Gabrio Serbelloni to examine minutely into the affair, who was a man well qualified for that purpose. Upon this occasion he gave his testimony so circumstantially, that the whole scheme was shewn in one view to originate in falsehood, and to have been fostered by malignity. Biggio was therefore dismissed and publicly reprimanded for his surreptitious conduct in this instance, as well as for the ruin of the bridge of S. Maria, and for his total want of conduct in the Port of Ancona, where he is said to have done more mischief in one day than the sea was capable of doing in ten years. The Directors apologized, acknowledging they had been misinformed: but Michel Angelo required no apology; that the Pope should know the truth was all he desired, which being accomplished, he was satisfied: his Holiness, however, prevailed upon him to hold his situation, and made a new arrangement, that his designs might not only be strictly executed as long as he lived, but adhered to after his death. Thus ended the last vexatious contest, of which so many had disturbed him in the progress of that import-

ant undertaking. Contrivances and falsehood belong to the weak and the worthless: with virtue and capacity the truly great man sees only his object distinctly before him, and the most direct means of accomplishing it. No one ever felt the dignity of human nature with its noblest attributes more forcibly than Michel Angelo, and his disgust at any violation of principle was acute in proportion to his sensibility and love of truth: but with these feelings which made him a better man, he was constantly irritated by attacks from the unprincipled pretensions of those who wished to make him subservient to sinister views.

After this discussion the time left to Michel Angelo for the enjoyment of his uncontrolled authority was short, for in the month of February, 1563, he was attacked by a slow fever, which gave him symptoms of his approaching death, and he desired Daniello da Volterra to write to his nephew Leonardo Buonarroti to come to Rome: his fever however increased, and his nephew not arriving, in the presence of his physician and others who were in his house, whom he ordered into his bed-room, he made this short nuncupative will—"My soul I resign to God, my body to the earth, and my worldly possessions to my nearest of kin[a];" then admonished his attendants, "In your passage through this life remember the sufferings of

[a] *Vasari*, tom. iii. p. 304.

Jesus Christ," and soon after delivering this charge he died, on the 17th of February, 1563[h].

Three days after his death the funeral ceremonies were performed with the most honourable respect to his memory, and his remains were deposited in the church of S. Apostoli, in Rome, attended by his friends, his countrymen, and a crowded populace. The Florentine Academy, however, petitioned the Grand Duke of Tuscany to interpose his influence with the Pope for the body to be removed to Florence, that they might have an opportunity of paying him due honours, and agreeably to his own desire lay his bones by those of his father. The Rev°. Mon°. Messer Vincenzio Borghini, their president, was requested to present their memorial, who accompanied it with the following letter.

"THE Academicians of Painters and Sculptors having met to consider how they might give most satisfaction to your Excellency in paying some tribute of honour to the memory of Michel Angelo Buonarroti, to whom the arts are so much indebted, and our common country in particular; are desirous to know the will and pleasure of your Excellency, to whom they look for assistance. I am intrusted by them, and prompted by my duty, to lay their

[h] The age of Michel Angelo was eighty-eight years, eleven months, and fifteen days; and his father lived to the advanced age of ninety-two.

memorial before you, having the honour this year, in the situation I am placed, of being your representative, and I do it most willingly, as their wishes appear to be excited by the most honourable motives, and still more when I consider how much your Excellency stands alone as a patron of genius; surpassing your illustrious ancestors, from whose munificence Giotto received a statue, and Fra. Filippo a marble monument, and from whom the arts derived the greatest honours.

"With these considerations I have been encouraged to recommend to your Excellency the petition of the Academicians to celebrate the talents of Michel Angelo, who in a peculiar manner was the scholar and protegé of Lorenzo the Magnificent. To grant their request will confer on them the greatest pleasure, stimulate the professors to emulation, gratify the public, and demonstrate to all Italy the munificence of your Excellency, whom God preserve long and happy, to be a benefactor to your people, and a protector of the fine arts."

March 2, 1563.

The ANSWER *of the* GRAND DUKE.

" Ours most dear and reverend,

" THE promptitude our Academy has shewn to honour the memory of so singular a man as Michel Angelo Buonarroti, who has passed from this into a better life, has given us great consolation for his loss. We are not only willing to grant the memorial, but still further, to order that means be adopted to remove the body to Florence, conformably to the will of the deceased. Thus much, therefore, we write, to encourage the members of the Academy to do all in their power to celebrate the talents of so great a man, and God reward you.

Pisa, March 8, 1563.

Upon the receipt of this letter the Members of the Academy presented a second memorial to the Grand Duke to this effect.

MOST ILLUSTRIOUS, &c.

"From the affectionate regard your Excellency has shewn for the memory of Michel Angelo Buonarroti, by the means you have used through your Orator in Rome to remove his body to Florence, the members of the Academy of Design, instituted by the grace and favour of your illustrious Lordship, have unanimously deliberated that his obsequies ought to be solemnized in the best manner possible; they therefore intreat it may be your pleasure that they might be celebrated in the church of S. Lorenzo, built by your ancestors, where there are so many fine works by Michel Angelo, as well in Architecture as in Sculpture. We also pray that your Excellency will be pleased to permit Messer Benedetto Varchi[k] to compose the funeral oration and recite it, which he has voluntarily offered, if it should be agreeable to your Lordship. We also supplicate, that all those who are necessary to the solemnization of these obsequies should be ordered to attend and give their assistance. All these things, and every one, have been deliberated on and discussed in the presence and with the approbation of the Magnificent Messer Vincenzio Borghini, your Excellency's representative in this Academy of Design."

[k] Benedetto Varchi was biographer to the Grand Duke.

The ANSWER.

" OURS MOST DEAR,

" WE are perfectly content fully to grant all your petitions, as toward the extraordinary talents of Michel Angelo Buonarroti we have ever borne the same esteem that we now bear towards you. That nothing may be omitted you have proposed, and that we may not be wanting in giving you our assistance, we have written to Messer Benedetto Varchi concerning the oration, and M. V. Borghini is ordered to see to the execution of the other parts of your petition. Remain well."

Pisa, March 8, 1563.

The Letter of the GRAND DUKE *to* M. B. VARCHI.

" Our most Dear M. Benedetto,

" THE affection we bear towards the talents of Michel Angelo Buonarroti makes us desire that his memory be celebrated with all possible honours, and it will be grateful to us, from the love we bear to him, that you make, agreeably to the wishes of the Academy, his funeral oration; and it will further give us pleasure that you recite it yourself. Remain well."

Pisa, March 9, 1563.

Added to these attentions, the Grand Duke desired that every mark of honour might be paid to the memory of Michel Angelo, and that on his part nothing should be wanting as far as his assistance could contribute to that end.

The body was obtained by Leonardo Buonarroti, who went to Rome upon his uncle's death, and by him privately conveyed to Florence. When it arrived, which was on the eleventh of March, the coffin was placed at the foot of the altar of S. Pietro Maggiore, and afterwards removed to the church of Santa Croce. By the Friars of that order funeral ceremonies were again performed, and, on the 14th of March, the body finally deposited in the Vault by the side of the altar, called, the Altare de' Cavalcanti[1].

The remains of Michel Angelo being now laid in the sepulchre of his ancestors, three persons were deputed by the Academy to make the necessary preparations for his obsequies. In Catholic countries, to honour kings and heroes, it is usual to raise a temporary mausoleum decorated with trophies or ensigns of royalty and power: but as the celebrity of Michel Angelo was derived from a different source, the genius of Painting, of Sculpture, and Architecture, characterising his intellectual superiority, were the fit objects to compose and ornament his cenotaph, and

1 About the year 1720 the vault was opened, and Bottari says, that the remains of Michel Angelo had not then lost their original form. He was habited in the costume of the antient citizens of Florence, in a gown of green velvet, and slippers of the same material.

with this view the Painters and Sculptors employed themselves in designing and executing appropriate works.

Agreeably to the wishes of the Academy the church of S. Lorenzo was appointed for this funereal fête, to offer up the last devotional rites for the immortality of his soul, and to proclaim to mankind the extent of his virtue and his talents. In the middle of the great nave was raised upon a rectangular platform three feet from the pavement, a monument somewhat in the form of a triple cube, in the style of the antient mausoleum of Septimius Severus: the divisions, each above the other, were contracted so as to leave sufficient room for statues to surround their respective bases, and at the top was a pyramid surmounted with a figure of Fame in the attitude of flying. On the spaces left for sculpture, statues were arranged emblematical of the various branches of knowledge connected with his professional attainments. On the façade of each division was an historical picture, in chiar'-oscuro, recording some circumstance or event in the life of Michel Angelo, with ornaments and appropriate inscriptions to combine the sentiment and connect the whole together. This cenotaph, which by the Italians is called a Catafalco, was twenty feet by seventeen at the base, and upwards of fifty feet in height. Such is the outline of the general composition, of which I have avoided the detail, lest it might be more tedious than interesting [m]. The preparations being finished [n], the church

[m] Those who wish for particulars I refer to Vasari, who has been circumstantial and minute. *Vite de' Pittore, &c.* tom. iii. p. 332.

hung with black cloth and completely illuminated, persons of every rank assembled and assisted at the awful mass for the dead, where grandeur and sublimity are combined to interest the feelings, with appropriate music to give pathos to the solemnity. When the mass was concluded, Varchi ascended a tribunal erected on the occasion, and delivered a funeral oration to honour the memory of the deceased, to excite a just admiration for his elevated genius, and a due sense of sorrow for his loss [n].

[n] The day on which this solemnity took place was the 14th of July 1563.

[o] This oration was published immediately afterwards, consisting of 63 quarto pages, with this title, "Orazione Funerale di M. Benedetto Varchi fatta, e recitata da Lui pubblicamente nell' esequie di Michelagnolo Buonarroti in Firenze, nella Chiesa di San Lorenzo."

MICHEL ANGELO was of the middle stature, bony in his make, and rather spare, although broad over the shoulders. He had a good complexion; his forehead was square, and somewhat projecting; his eyes rather small, of a hazel colour, and on his brows but little hair; his nose was flat, being disfigured from the blow he received from Torrigiano [p];

p Condivi says, the blow was so violent that Michel Angelo was carried home as if dead, and for this act Torrigiano was obliged to leave Florence.

Pietro Torrigiano was a contemporary student with Michel Angelo, and a sculptor of very superior merit, but a proud inconsiderate and ungovernable character. Benvenuto Celini, in his own life, has recorded this affair with Michel Angelo, as related to him by Torrigiano himself. "His conversation one day happened to turn upon Michel Angelo Buonarroti, on seeing a drawing of mine made from the celebrated Cartoon of the battle of Pisa."—"This Buonarroti and I, (said Torrigiano), when we were young men, went to study in the church of the Carmelites, in the chapel of Masaccio; and it was customary with Buonarroti to rally those who were learning to draw there. One day, amongst others, a sarcasm of his having stung me to the quick, I was extremely irritated, and, doubling my fist, gave him such a violent blow upon his nose, that I felt the bone and cartilage yield as if they had been made of paste, and the mark I then gave him he will carry to his grave."

B. Cellini's account of Torrigiano, is,—"That he was a handsome man, but of consummate assurance, having rather the air of a *bravo* than a sculptor: above all, his strange gestures and his sonorous voice, with a manner of knitting his brows, enough to frighten every man who saw him, gave him a most tremendous appearance, and he was continually talking of his great feats amongst those bears of Englishmen whose country he had but recently left."

We are indebted to Torrigiano for the monument of Henry VII. in Westminster Abbey, finished, according to Stowe, in 1519, and for which the sculptor had a thousand pounds. His ungovernable and restless habits often precipitated him into great difficulties, and the circumstances of his death furnish a melancholy instance of the vicissitude of life, and the baneful effects of inquisitorial jurisprudence.

Upon leaving England he visited Spain, and after distinguishing himself by many excellent works, was employed by a Spanish Grandee to sculpture in marble a Madonna and infant Christ, of the size of nature, with high promises to be rewarded in proportion

his lips were thin, and, speaking anatomically, the cranium on the whole was rather large in proportion to the face. He wore his beard, which was divided into two points at the bottom, not very thick, and about four inches long; his beard and the hair of his head were black when a young man, and his countenance animated and expressive.

In his childhood he was of a weakly constitution, and to guard his health with peculiar care, he was abstemious and continent; he seldom partook of the enjoyments of the table, and was used to say, "that however rich I may have been, I have always lived as a poor man." Although he ate little he was extremely irregular in his meals, he had a bad

to its merit; as the grandee was of the first rank, Torrigiano flattered himself with proportionate expectation. After much study and application he completed his work to his own satisfaction, and the grandee saw the performance with delight and reverence, bestowing on him the highest praise. Impatient to possess his treasure, he immediately sent for it, and that his generosity might be displayed to the greatest advantage, he loaded two lacqueys with the money to defray the purchase. The bulk was promising; but when the bags were found to contain nothing but brass maravedi, which amounted only to the small sum of thirty ducats, vexation and disappointment roused Torrigiano's resentment, who considered this present rather as an insult than as a reward for his merit, and, on a sudden, snatched up his mallet, and without regard to the perfection of his workmanship, or the sacred character of the image, he broke it into pieces, and dismissed the lacqueys with their load of farthings to tell the tale. The grandee, with every passion alive to this merited disgrace, and perhaps impressed with horror for the sacrilegious nature of the act, presented him before the court of Inquisition, and impeached him for his conduct as an infidel and a heretic. Torrigiano urged the right of an author over his own creation: reason pleaded on his side; but Superstition sat in judgment, and he was condemned to lose his life with torture; but the holy office lost its victim—Torrigiano starved himself to death in prison, to avoid its torments and the horror of the execution.

digestion, and much troubled with the headach, which he attributed to his requiring little sleep, and the delicate state of his stomach: notwithstanding these evils, during the meridian of life his general health was but little impaired. Many years before his death he was afflicted with stone and gravel, and received essential benefit from his most intimate friend M. Realdo Colombo, an eminent surgeon and physician [q]. When advanced in years he was tormented with the cramp in his legs, for which complaint he constantly wore a tight covering for the leg made of dog's skin, over which he drew his stockings and a pair of cordovan boots, in other respects his dress conformed to the costumè of his time.

In the early part of life, Michel Angelo not only applied himself to sculpture and painting, but to every branch of knowledge connected in any way with those arts, and gave himself up so much to application, that he in a great degree withdrew from society. From this ruling passion to cultivate his mind he became habituated to solitude, and happy in his pursuits, he was more contented to be alone than in company; by which he obtained the character of being a proud and an odd man, distinctions that never fail to be given to those with whom we wish to find fault for not resembling ourselves. When his mind was matured he attached

[q] Messer Realdo Colombo was a Cremonese, and the author of fifteen books on Anatomy, printed in Venice 1559, and afterwards in Paris in 1572.

himself to men of learning and judgment, and in the number of his most intimate friends were ranked the highest dignitaries in the church, and the most eminent literary characters of his time. That princely Cardinal, Ippolito de' Medici[r], and the Cardinals Bembo, Ridolfi, and Maffeo, were distinguished for their friendship towards him, and, as an Englishman, it gives me pleasure to find Cardinal Pole amongst them, entitled, " suo amicissimo[s]." Ippolito de'

[r] Ippolito de' Medici was the natural son of Duke Giuliano de' Medici, brother to Leo X. He was an extraordinary man, of whose munificence and princely style of living we have the concurring testimony of all contemporary writers. The following account of him has been collected by M. Tenhove, in his Memoirs of the House of Medici. " He was educated by the care of Leo X. and a greater genius was not to be found, nor a greater taste for the arts and sciences and letters.—The learned languages were familiar to him almost from his infancy, and he excelled in verse and prose.—Berni, and other writers, mention his translation into blank verse of Virgil's second book of the Æneid, and he was a perfect musician on every instrument. On the flute he was astonishing—he was the first violin in Italy—and on the trumpet without a rival.—His liberality was boundless, to refuse a request was not in his power, and it was not with gold alone that he rewarded genius and talents.—With the artist and the learned he lived on the most friendly terms, as their equal and companion—his service had nothing harsh nor austere—nothing humiliating—and his dependants felt nothing of his superiority. But with all these excellent qualities, his fickleness and inconstancy were without example. At thirty years of age he died, and, with probability, is supposed to have been carried off by poison. His death was a subject of general regret to men of letters and virtuosi of every description. He not only patronized arts and sciences and letters, but all the graceful exercises, and persons who excelled in them had been assembled from all the quarters of the globe: more than twenty different languages were spoken in his palace, and the music of every country echoed from its walls."

[s] According to Camden Cardinal Pole is supposed to have been born in the year 1500, and died Archbishop of Canterbury, on the 17th of Nov. 1558. Hume has given the

Medici was particularly partial to him, and understanding that Michel Angelo admired a Turkish horse he possessed, he sent it to his house, with ten mules loaded with corn, and begged his acceptance of the gift as a mark of his esteem. Notwithstanding he ranked in the number of his acquaintance the most distinguished names of his time, he was also pleased with the harmless comedy of human life, and occasionally amused with the eccentric good nature of those who had little else to recommend them [t]. But the person of all others who absorbed his affections and esteem, was that excellent and accomplished woman, the celebrated Vittoria Colonna,

following character of him. "The modesty and humanity of his deportment made him universally beloved; insomuch that in a nation where the most furious persecution was carried on, and where the most violent religious factions prevailed, entire justice, even by most of the reformers, has been done to his merit." *History of England, reign of Queen Mary.*

[t] Among the persons of this description Vasari names one Menigella, a very indifferent painter, and Giuliano Burgiardini, to whom Michel Angelo once sat for his portrait, to oblige Ottaviano de' Medici.

Benvenuto Celini, in the life of himself, speaks of a club established by a statuary of the name of Michel Angelo, who appears to have been a facetious debauchè, if credit be given to his account of a revel held at his house. This person was a native of Siena, and I believe is only known as a sculptor by a monument which he executed in part, from a design of Peruzzi, to honour the memory of Adrian VI. He was patronized by Cardinal Incfort, at whose instance the monument was made. Vasari has given a short account of him, and says that he died at about fifty years of age. *Vide Vita de Pittori, &c.* tom. ii. p. 260. This circumstance is mentioned to prevent any mistake of the Sienese sculptor in the life of Benvenuto Celini being taken for the divine Michel Angelo, who by this distinctive appellation is so often mentioned by that author.

Marchioness of Pescara; her superior mind and endowments, and her partiality for his genius, impressed him with the most lively sense of esteem. For many years before her death she resided at Viterbo, and occasionally visited Rome for no other purpose than to enjoy his society. To her Michel Angelo addressed three sonnets and a madrigal, and wrote an epitaph on her death, in which his admiration of her beauty and accomplishments is tempered with the most profound respect for her character [u]. In her last moments Michel Angelo paid her a visit, and afterwards told Condivi he grieved he had not kissed her cheek as he did her hand, since there was then but little hope of his ever seeing her again. The same writer also observes, that the recollection of her death constantly produced dejection in his mind [x].

Among the authors he studied and delighted in most, were Dante and Petrarch; of these it is said he could nearly repeat by memory all their poems, and many of his sonnets shew how much he desired to imitate the poet of Vaucluse. He also studied with equal attention the sacred writings of

[u] Vide cxx. cxxi. cxxii. cxxiii. cxxiv.

[x] Michel Angelo made three drawings for the Marchioness of Pescara, but it does not appear that he executed any of them in marble, as stated by Mr. Roscoe, (Life and Pontificate of Leo X. vol. iii. p. 220). These compositions were, a Crucifixion, Christ and the Woman of Samaria at the Well, and a Pietà, with the representation of the cross carried in procession in Florence in the destructive plague of 1348, with these words printed on the upright shaft, "Non vi si pensa quanto sangue costa." These compositions are inserted in the Appendix.

the Old and New Testament. His acquirements in anatomy are manifest throughout his works, and he often proposed to publish a treatise upon that subject for the use of painters and sculptors; principally to shew what muscles were brought into action in the various motions of the human body, and was only prevented, from fearing lest he should not be able to express himself so clearly and fully as the nature of the subject required. It is a common opinion, that he entertained some theory upon muscular motion; but I have not been able to make that inference from any passage in his own writings, or that of any contemporary author: Condivi says he had some ingenious theory in his mind upon anatomy, but what that theory was he does not himself seem to know, and we are left without data to form a conjecture; but it is evident that Condivi never meant to imply that the theory, whatever it might have been, had reference to any latent physiological principle, for he previously states "His knowledge of human anatomy, and of other animals[y], was so correct, that those who had all their lives studied it as their profession hardly understood the subject so well: I speak only of that department necessary to the arts of design, which indeed his works evidently demonstrate, but not as to the minutiæ necessary for a surgeon[z]." When Michel Angelo first began to dissect,

[y] Of the quadrupeds he used to dissect, the horse was the animal he paid most attention to.

[z] Sect. LVI. et LX. *Condivi vita de Michel Angelo.*

he was so disgusted with the offensiveness of the study that he lost his appetite, and, conceiving that his powers of digestion were impaired, for a time desisted, yet was soon dissatisfied with himself for not being able to do what was every day done by others without inconvenience; he therefore took up the study again, and pursued it to the fullest extent necessary to his profession. Of perspective he knew as much as was known in the age in which he lived; but this branch of knowledge was not then reduced to a science, nor governed by mathematical principles; and, in justice to our own country, that discovery was made in the beginning of the last century (1715), by Dr. Brook Taylor, who has had more voluminous commentaries on his two small pamphlets than have been written upon any work since his time.

The love of wealth made no part of Michel Angelo's character; he was in no instance covetous of money, nor attentive to its accumulation; that which was sufficient for him to live respectably bounded his wishes, and he was an example of his own opinion.

"Che l'tempo è breve è 'l necessario poco[a]."

Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long.

When he was offered commissions from the rich with large sums, he rarely accepted them, being more stimulated by

[a] cxxxviii.

friendship and benevolence than the desire of gain. For eighteen years he gave up the greatest part of his time to the building of St. Peter's, without emolument; and when Paul III. sent him a sum equivalent to forty pounds of our money for one month's pay at the commencement of the undertaking, he returned it, being influenced only to undertake the employment from motives of honour and zeal. He freely assisted literary men as well as those of his own profession, who were not in such good circumstances as himself; but the most enviable instance of his liberality is a donation he made to his old and faithful servant Urbino. —Michel Angelo talking to him one day, asked him, "What will become of you, Urbino, if I were to die?" he replied, "I must then serve another." "Poor fellow," said Michel Angelo, "I will take care thou shalt not stand in need of another master," and immediately made him a present of two thousand crowns. An act, as Vasari exclaims, only to be expected from Popes and great Emperors [b]. For

[a] To his nephew Leonardo Buonarroti, Vasari says, he gave three or four thousand crowns at a time.—"Al Nepote ha dato per volta tre e quattro mille scudi e nel fine gli ha lassato scudi diece mille senza le cose di Roma."

By the following brief Michel Angelo seems to have obtained for Urbino an appointment in the Vatican, to take care of the pictures; which place, by the Italians, is called Custodio.

Paulus Papa III. ad futuram rei memoriam.

"To preserve from every kind of injury the extraordinary pictures in the Sistine Chapel, where our venerable brethren the Cardinals of the holy Roman church usually

this servant it is evident he had a very sincere regard; upon his death, which took place five or six years before his own, he wrote to Vasari a letter full of pathos, which does honour to his feelings.

" MY DEAR GIORGIO,

" I AM but ill disposed to write, however I will sit down to answer yours. You already know that Urbino is dead. His death has been a heavy loss to me, and

solemnize divine service; those also in the Pauline Chapel, painted and now executing by our dearly beloved Michel Angelo and others, in the grand hall of our palace, at a great expence of the apostolical government: We do constitute and appoint a conservator, with a salary of six golden crowns per month, to be paid by the apostolical chamber, at the same time, and in the same manner, as to the other persons belonging to our chapel. At all future times, whenever the place becomes vacant, the appointment shall be made by the reigning Pontiff, to fulfil the duties of the office required by these presents.

" By this our Will and authority the office of Conservator being established, we grant the same to our dearly beloved Francesco Amatori d'Urbino, who belongs to the household of the aforesaid Michel Angelo Buonarroti, with all the honours, privileges, indulgencies, and prerogatives thereunto belonging, with the salary of six ducats as aforesaid, with the addition of four crowns per month for incidental expences, to be paid by our treasurer, commencing on the 1st of November next ensuing; and the said Francesco Amatori d' Urbino shall be obliged to clean the pictures from dust or any other injury, and preserve them from the smoke of the lamps and candles which are used in the celebration of divine service in the chapels before named; and he shall hold this office during his life, nor be restrained from the free exercise of what appertains to the situation: and whatever is to the contrary of this our will, is declared null and void, &c." *Vide Lettere Pittoreche,* vol. vi. p. 24.

the cause of excessive grief, but it has also been a most impressive lesson of the grace of God: for it has shewn me, that he, who in his lifetime comforted me in the enjoyment of life, dying, has taught me how to die; not with reluctance, but even with a desire of death. He lived with me twenty-six years, grew rich in my service, and I found him a most rare and faithful servant; and now that I calculated upon his being the staff and repose of my old age he is taken away, and has left me only the hope of seeing him again in Paradise. That he will go there, the beneficence of God has already given a sign in the happy serenity of his last moments; for his death caused him much less sorrow, than the concern he felt at leaving me in this treacherous world surrounded with troubles: my better part, however, is gone with him, and nothing remains to me but infinite misery. Farewel.

"MICHELAGNOLO BUONARROTI."

(Let. XIII.)

Michel Angelo had a great love for his art, and a laudable desire to perpetuate his name. A friend of his regretted that he had no children to bequeath the profits acquired by his profession, to which he answered, "My works must supply their place; and if they are good for any thing, they will live hereafter. It would have been unfortunate for

Lorenzo Ghiberti, had he not left the Doors of S. Giovanni, for his sons and his nephews have long since sold and dissipated his accumulated wealth; but his sculpture remains, and will continue to record his name to future ages[c]." He established it as a principle, that to live in credit was enough, if life was virtuously and honourably employed for the good of others and the benefit of posterity; and thus he laid up the most profitable treasure for his old age, and calculated upon its best resources; since he whose wealth serves only to enrich himself, is insulated as life declines, or surrounded by dependents, none of whom wish the continuance of his being; but he who has cultivated his mind with useful knowledge, and devoted himself to the practice of virtue, makes all nature interested in the length of his days.

As the elevation of eminent men is usually balanced by the calumny of detraction, or by being an object for the hateful passions of the envious; so Michel Angelo was not exempt: but as such characters are not much attended to beyond their own circle, and do but little mischief, he overlooked them with philosophic indifference,

[c] These doors are of bronze, divided into compartments containing basso-relievos on sacred subjects, and are ranked among the first productions of sculpture since the revival of the art. When Michel Angelo was once asked his opinion of them, he said they were fit to be the doors of Paradise.

and when he was asked why he did not resent the ill treatment he daily experienced from the insidious conduct of Baccio Bigio; his answer was, "He who contends with the worthless, can gain nothing that is worth possessing." But the fashionable violation of plausible professions amongst those of higher rank often annoyed and disgusted him, and the constant necessity of decorous simulation to preserve the equilibrium of civilized society, was repugnant to his sense of honour and veracity. In a madrigal to his friend Luigi del Ricco, we have a transcript of his mind under the unfavourable impression of these feelings.

Ill hath he chosen his part who seeks to please
The worthless world,—ill hath he chosen his part,
For often must he wear the look of ease
When grief is at his heart;
And often in his hours of happier feeling
With sorrow must his countenance be hung,
And ever his own better thoughts concealing
Must he in stupid Grandeur's praise be loud,
And to the errors of the ignorant crowd
Assent with lying tongue.
Thus much would I conceal that none should know
What secret cause I have for silent woe;

And taught by many a melancholy proof
That those whom Fortune favours it pollutes,
I from the blind and faithless world aloof,
Nor fear its envy nor desire its praise,
But choose my path through solitary ways[d].

Towards those whom he honoured and esteemed he was as solicitous of being beloved, as he was regardless of courtesy to his enemies; and this short epistle to a nobleman is a good example of that delicacy of mind.

"MY LORD MARQUIS,

"WHILE I was in Rome no opportunity occurred to leave the crucifix with M. Tomaso, your agent, though I can assure your Lordship that I have ever been more desirous of serving you than any man I ever knew in the world. The hurry of business in which I have been involved, and which still continues to occupy my attention, prevented me from acquainting you with it; besides, love, as your Lordship well knows, requires no master, nor even sleeps over that which is unattainable; and in this case, although I may appear to have been negligent, I did my

[d] cxxvii.

best in silence, in order to accomplish what was not expected from me; but my intention has been disappointed.

"He who forgets great obligations, himself deserves to be forgotten.

"MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI[c]."

Michel Angelo was never married, and whether he was at any time on the point of being so, is not known; that he was a man of domestic habits is certain, and possessed ardent and affectionate feelings. Although love is the principal subject which pervades his poetry, and Petrarch the sole object of his imitation, no mention is made of his Laura, his Stella or Eliza, her name is concealed, if she had any; but the prevalency in his day of consolidating all personal feeling into Platonism and a species of unintelligible metaphysics, is strongly to be suspected gave birth to most of his sonnets; there is one poem, however, probably not of that description (XLVII), in which the passions of disappointed love are expressed with acrimony, in consequence of some neglect he appears to have received, originating in the scandal of a person well known for her mischievous character, and he regrets that, "Woman, who ought to aspire to the cultivation and belief of truth, should be so easily persuaded by fallacious arguments to credit falsehoods and

[c] Let. XIV.

listen to lying tongues." It contains sentiments common to generous and indignant minds, ill treated by the meddling interference of those whose pleasure would seem to be in proportion to the dissension they produce; and concludes with these lines:

Nuoce viè più che scriver non saprei,
E l'onor fiede, e da morte alla fama.

"I want terms to express my abhorrence of those who are the assassins of reputation and honour."

In a madrigal addressed to the Marchioness of Pescara he has given us his sentiments and opinion on Friendship,—"which depends upon the inclination and the power between virtuous minds reciprocally to confer marks of affection and esteem;—but to load with obligation those who can never repay the debt, is to oppress the feelings we mean to cherish; and though the highest sense of gratitude may supply their place, friendship, so rarely to be found, which entwines the heart and makes the social sympathy complete, demands that there should be an equality both in fortune and virtue[g]."

In his professional labours he continued to study to the end of his life, but never satisfied with any thing he

[g] cxxi.

did: when he saw any imperfection that might have been avoided, he easily became disgusted, rather preferring to commence his undertaking entirely anew than attempt an emendation. With this operating principle in his mind he completed few works in sculpture. Lomazzo tells an anecdote, that Cardinal Farnese one day found Michel Angelo, when an old man, walking alone in the Colosseum, and expressed his surprise at finding him solitary amidst the ruins; to which he replied, "I yet go to school that I may continue to learn something." Whether the anecdote be correctly true or not, it is evident he entertained this feeling, for there is still remaining a design by him, of an old man with a long beard in a child's go-cart, and an hour-glass before him, emblematical of the last stage of life, and on a scroll over his head ANCHORA INPARO, in Roman capitals, denoting that no state of bodily decay or approximation to death was incompatible with intellectual improvement[h].

The marked distinction shewn to him by the potentates of Europe corresponded to his claims. When Bajazet II. solicited him to build a bridge to unite Pera to Constantinople, he sent him also at the same time a letter of credit upon a banker in Florence, and upon all the cities on his way to take up as much money as he required for his expences, and upon the frontiers of his dominions, where-

[h] See this figure in the Appendix.

ever he chose, an escort of janissaries were to be in readiness to conduct him to Constantinople. This offer was declined, as I have before observed, through the advice and persuasion of the Gonfaloniere Soderini. Francis I. intreated him to visit France, and used many arguments to persuade him to reside at his court, with an offer of three thousand crowns to pay the expences of his journey. The Republic of Venice sent a person of the name of Bruciolo to make him an offer of an annual pension of six thousand crowns to reside in that city, and a discretionary power to employ his time in whatever manner he chose, and be paid for what he did without any reference to his pension. With respect to the Popes, under whose government he may be said more particularly to have lived, sufficient instances have already been enumerated to shew how much he was respected and valued.

To commemorate his fame, all who could make verses employed their pens to pay some tribute to his memory, and no less than forty-five of these compositions, both in Italian and Latin, were collected and published soon after his death, in a little book entitled, " Poesie di diversi Authori Latine e volgare, fatte nella morte di Michel Agnolo Buonarroti." The poems, as literary compositions, are for the most part of no value, and these two verses may be considered as an epitome of all they contain[1]:

[1] From the following letter it would seem that he was used to receive high poetical commendation in his lifetime; but from the flattery that is here indicated, it is most

QUANTUM IN NATURA ARS NATURAQUE POSSIT IN ARTE
HIC QUI NATURÆ PAR FUIT ARTE DOCET.

In the preceding pages I have endeavoured to trace the character of Michel Angelo as a man, which has appeared to me in all essential points entitled to honour and esteem. Although his highminded philosophy made him often regardless of rank and dignity, and his knowledge of human nature in one view concentrated the plausible motives and the inconsistent professions of men, yet he was not morose in his disposition, nor cynical in his habits. Those who knew him well esteemed him most, and those who were worthy of his friendship knew how to value it. The worthless flatterers of powerful ignorance, and the cunning, who at all times trust to the pervading influence of folly, feared and hated him. He was impetuous in the highest degree when he felt the

probable the Madrigal and the Sonnets alluded to, were as worthless as hyperbole generally is.

To NICCOLO MARTELLI.

"MESSER Niccolò, I have received your letter by the favour of M. Vincenzo Perini, with two sonnets and a madrigal. The letter and the sonnet directed to me are admirable, and no one can be so refined in his taste as to discover in them any thing to refine; it is true they praise me so much that if I were perfection itself it would still be excessive. I see you fancy me to be what I would to God I were. I am a poor man of little account, and go on labouring in that art which God has given me, to prolong my life as much as I can; and such as I am, I am the humble servant of you and your family. For the letter and the sonnets I return you my thanks; but not as I feel obliged, because I am unequal to the acknowledgment of such distinguished courtesy.

"MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI."

(Let. XV.)

slightest attack upon his integrity, and hasty in his decisions, which gave him an air of irascibility; but to all who were in need of assistance from his fortune or his talents he exercised a princely liberality; and to those of honourable worth, however low their station, he was kind and benevolent, he sympathized with their distress, nor ever refused assistance to lessen the weight of oppression. In the Catholic faith of his ancestors he was a sincere Christian, and enjoyed its beneficent influence: he was not theoretically one man, and practically another; nor was his piety ever subservient to caprice or personal convenience,—his religion was not as a staff he leant upon, but the prop by which he was supported. Such was the life and character of Michel Angelo I have been able to collect from the most authentic materials, and which I have written with peculiar pleasure to myself.

Munslow.

By the favour of William Young Otley, Esq. I have been enabled to enrich my work with a fac-simile of Michel Angelo's hand-writing, of which the annexed is a faithful representation. It is a fragment of a letter, in itself but little interesting. It appears to be concerning some money transaction with an agent of the Pope (Clement VII.) and was a duplicate written for his own satisfaction, as appears by the concluding lines.

" La chopia della lectera che Io Michelagnio Buonar*roti mandata* sta mani a di 18 d'Octobre 1524, a Giovanni s **e Salviati. Lapportatore e stato Antonio Mini che *** in suruna carta come questa."

" The copy of a letter which I Michel Angelo Buonarroti sent this morning, the 18th of October 1524, to Giovanni *** Salviati. The bearer was Antonio Mini, &c."

ava p̄ch̄ io nō ne uoglio essere debitore e ultima
uorno mi mi ch̄ sta mocho logiornate dis̄alo nanzo gli
sti laquantita de danari ch̄ io voleuo ch̄ nō auenu
ossi a ch̄anchio fio michio ch̄ e danari ella prou
dalspapa io gli pigliaro p̄ poterlo seruire meglio e
ose chom̄e ep̄ potere tornare nella chasa chen
sangiouanni detto e selspapa le dette prencipio lui
mene dia io ami chonteto di quelchi ch̄ casua s̄ si
e ep̄ ch̄ io credo ch̄ e sfacci bene cio ch̄ e sfa nola
minciare altrimeti nō prima nepoi e lui pri
ch̄ io nobbi sfa ora octo mesi guardate se
lla uostra e se auoto chomessione datemela
uantita ch̄ mi tochi insino aggi se no lauete
abbiate arrossire come basta ch̄ e nō si possa
nolabbi ch̄ ipsa e chosi me forza sfarlo m
p̄ mia questi fichatione

lachopia della lettera ch̄ io mi ch̄ lagnio bnona
ta stamani adi 18 dottobre 152 ep̄ a giouanni
e saluati lapportatore e sia anto nio mini ch̄
m̄ suruna carta come questa

ALL human excellence has its basis in reason and propriety; and the mind, to be interested to any efficient purpose, must neither be distracted nor confused[k]; however elevated the soaring flight of genius, if intended for permanent admiration, its course must not be directed by the caprice of fashion, but governed by unalterable laws conformable to the great and general principles of nature. Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, with all the productions of taste and science, have the same common data, and in proportion as they exhibit the powers of the understanding or the sensibility of the heart, they will be destined to immortality.

The Arts, previous to the time of Michel Angelo, had slowly but progressively advanced from the middle of the fourteenth century. When they were revived by Cimabue

[k] In Painting, the great principle of intelligibility is technically termed *breadth*, whether it refers to colour, or to chiar'-oscuro. In architecture, when a large building is divided into small parts, with little connexion or relation to the whole composition, and wanting bold projections or recesses for depths of shadow, it may be said to be without *breadth* or *effect**; and in sculpture the executive skill of the artist is shewn in preserving the *demi-plat* of the figure, which is only another term for keeping one part in judicious subordination, that others may be better shewn with their true form and character, and corresponds to the half tint in a picture.

* This term is also used technically in painting to denote a concentrating principle of light-and-shadow.

and Giotto [1], meagre and individual form, without selection, bounded their knowledge: to combine and generalize those principles, which make the arts allied to poetry was then not known, and mechanical excellence confined to unlearned imitation was the chief object of their attainment; but with the extended views of more enlightened science genius expanded, and latent principles were gradually unfolded. When by design and composition the human passions were expressed, chiar'-oscuro and colour were soon added to make the representation more complete, and the art more interesting and popular, and in an age of luxury, when that which is most splendid and gives the least trouble to reflection, is most admired, the thinking and philosophical schools of Florence and Rome ceased to be attractive; and if in our time gaiety of colours and dexterity in using them should have influenced the public taste, the works in painting of which I have to speak will be uninteresting; yet, whatever may be the opinions of the day, this principle still remains, that painting, in as much as it only imitates the visible appearances of bodies, and makes them sensible to our ordinary perceptions, is an art that ranks very little above the mechanical employments that fashion raw materials to our use: but when this manipulation produces the essential qualities which identify character and expression with our feelings, it is then that it becomes estimable as poetry, history, or biography.

[1] Cimabue died 1300, and Giotto 1336, both at sixty years of age.

Sculpture, more simple in the operation by which it is produced, is little capable of superficial attractions, being limited by the material to the characteristics of *form*; yet the field of imitation is wide, and the powers of making the accurate resemblances of familiar objects with a facility of execution, have always had charms for the vulgar of every age and nation; hence it has been often degraded by caprice and novelties adapted to meet popular feelings, and though with higher claims, Bernini and Bouchardon for those qualities, exhausted the praise of the time in which they lived [m]. Unaffected, simple, and aggregate beauty, are the only true elements of sculpture, and in them all subordinate considerations, trifling ornaments, and minor attractions are lost: it is an art that has grandeur and sublimity for its object, and the means ought never to be subversive of the end. Whatever is picturesque in marble is intrusive, and, like poppies in a field of corn, if luxuriant to the transient view, are poison to the reflecting mind.

Architecture claims dominion over our feelings by unity of design and conformity of character, where all the parts compose a whole without confusion or discordance, and chiar'-oscuro unites them to make one grand impression on the senses. Upon these principles the architecture of the

[m] The monument of Urbin VIII. in St. Peter's, by Bernini, is a complete example of the style of Rubens, in marble; than which, it would not be easy to point out a more remarkable instance of bad taste.

Greeks will live as long as taste and judgment remain, and by the same data the works of Francesco Borromini will serve to shew how the greatest science and knowledge may be misapplied [n].

SCULPTURE Michel Angelo considered as his profession, which he began to cultivate by having an implicit deference to nature, a due respect for the works of his predecessors, and matured his studies by contemplating the principles of the antients; for he who takes for his model individual nature, and confines himself to exact imitation, cannot hope to attain to the perfection of ideal form. Phidias, when he made his Jupiter, copied no object he had ever seen, but contemplated only that image he conceived in his mind from Homer's description [o]. Michel Angelo's first

[n] Vide the church of the Sapienza, S. Carlino alle quattro Fontane, in Rome; with an infinite number of his works in that city in the same style.

[o] In strict propriety, the Grecian statues only excel nature, by bringing together such an assemblage of beautiful parts as nature was never known to bestow on one object:

For earth-born graces sparingly impart
The symmetry supreme of perfect art.

To illustrate this subject still further, Sir Joshua Reynolds, from whose works I have taken this note, goes on to observe:—It must be remembered that the component parts of the most perfect statue never can excel nature,—that we can form no idea of beauty beyond her works: we can only make this rare assemblage; an assemblage so rare, that if we are to give the name of Monster to what is uncommon, we might, in the words of the Duke of Buckingham, call it

A faultless monster which the world ne'er saw *.

Sir Joshua Reynolds, vol. iii. p. 113.

* "Sine labe monstrum."
Scaliger.

work of celebrity was a group of a Madonna with a dead Christ, called in Italian a Pietà. The subject in its nature is impressive; the composition is felt with appropriate simplicity, and of all his works it is that which seems to have cost him the most laborious attention. In his subsequent sculpture he has shewn the result of this assiduity by a facility which has rather the appearance of being born with him, than the result of application; and his dexterity of execution, if not unrivalled, has certainly not been surpassed in modern times.

As the great end of art is to strike the imagination, expression and character with him were a primary consideration; and although he set the antique sculpture before him as an example and a guide, this marked distinction is to be taken between his view of the subject and that of the antients. He made ideal beauty and aggregate form subservient to expression; they, on the contrary, made expression and animated feelings subservient to form. The Laocoon[p] and his two Sons have more expression in their countenance than all the other antique statues united; yet Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed, that even in this instance there is

[p] This statue is finished with the chisel, shewing a command of execution quite incredible; and I once heard, in Rome, a very eminent sculptor say, he believed the statue had been previously finished with the rasp and file, and that the marks of the chisel were made afterwards to give the appearance of facility to the execution, and at the same time a roughness to the surface, which was more favourable to the general effect of the figure than if it had been left quite smooth.

only the general expression of pain, and that is still more strongly expressed by the writhing and contortion of the body than by the features. In consulting all the examples which are left of antient sculpture, it would seem that they established it as a general principle, to preserve the most perfect beauty, in its most perfect state, the passions were not to be expressed; all of which may be supposed to produce distortion and deformity, more or less, in the most beautiful faces. The group of the Boxers is a remarkable instance in favour of this opinion; they are engaged in the most animated action with the greatest serenity of countenance; and without attributes it would be difficult to discriminate between the Juno or the Minerva, the Bacchus or the Meleager; neverthless, in the Apollo Pythius there is a graceful, negligent, and animated air, and in the Discobolus a vulgar eagerness of expression, which deserves to be remarked, to shew the nice discrimination of character which the antients were capable of making when the expression was not incompatible with what they considered a higher excellence.

The statue of Moses, in S. Pietro in Vinculi, is the most complete example I can adduce of those comprehensive powers of Michel Angelo's mind, which in different degrees are found to pervade his works. The character, air, and attitude of that figure, are a grand personification of the author of the Pentateuch, and Law-giver of the Jews; in his countenance is a dignified sternness of expression, marking

a powerful and vigorous intellect, the whole style of the figure is uniformly grand, of one sentiment and feeling, and shews how much the mind of Michel Angelo was removed from the simple representation of the common objects of nature: although it has many defects, if compared with the highest examples of antiquity, yet the entire impression is sublime, and worthy the celebrated Sonnet of Gio. Battista Zappi, not less interesting in Mr. Roscoe's elegant translation.

SONNET.

And who is he that, shap'd in sculptur'd stone,
Sits giant-like? stern monument of art
Unparallel'd, while language seems to start
From his prompt lips, and we his precepts own?
—'Tis Moses; by his beard's thick honours known,
And the twin beams that from his temples dart;
'Tis Moses; seated on the mount apart,
Whilst yet the Godhead o'er his features shone.
Such once he looked, when ocean's sounding wave
Suspended hung, and such amidst the storm,
When o'er his foes the refluent waters roar'd.
An idol calf his followers did engrave;

But had they rais'd this awe-commanding form,
Then had they with less guilt their work ador'd [q].

The figures of Day and Evening in the monuments of Giuliano and Lorenzo de' Medici are in the same style of conception, but were left unfinished: the Madonna in the same room is composed with pathos and simplicity, and the statue of Lorenzo de' Medici, in his monument, is simple and majestic without extravagance or affectation. The two statues of prisoners or slaves which were to have composed part of the original monument of Julius II. now in the National Museum in Paris, may be equal to his best productions, if credit be given to the exclamation of

SONETTO,

DE GIO. BATTISTA ZAPPI.

Chi è costui, che in si gran pietra scolto,
Siede Gigante, e le più illustri, e conte
Opre dell' Arte avanza, e ha vive, e pronte
Le labbra sì, che la parole ascolto!
Questi è Mosè, ben me'l dimostra il folto
Onor del mento, e il doppio raggio in fronte:
Questi è Mosè, quando scendea dal Monte,
E gran parte del Nume avea nel volto,
Tal era allor, che le sonanti, e vaste
Acque ei sospese a se d' intorno, e tale
Quando il Mar chiuse, e ne fe tomba altrui.
E voi sue Turbe un rio Vitello alzaste?
Alzato aveste immago a questa eguale,
Ch' era men fallo l' adorar costui.

Falconet when he first saw them, who said, " J'ai vu Michelange; *Il est effrayant.*" These two statues are the only finished works by Michel Angelo I have not seen. The Christ in the church of the Minerva in Rome, and the David and Bacchus in Florence, are less successful efforts of his genius; their character did not admit of any violence of expression, and the ideal beauty of the ancients depending on the purity of outline and correctness of form, was, as I have already observed, a subordinate quality in the talents of Michel Angelo. In the Bacchus, indeed, an attempt is made to unite a degree of drunkenness with his character; but, in as much as it is effected, both the statue and the deity are disgraced: of this feeling there are several examples in antique gems, but however skilful the representation may be in a basso-relievo not exceeding the size of a medallion, it is evident they never thought it would bear magnifying to the proportion of life; as the antique statue of Bacchus is an exquisite example of ideal beauty: this figure, however, by Michel Angelo, was produced when he was little more than twenty years of age. The two female figures composing part of the present monument of Julius II. called, by Vasari, Rachel and Leah, are simple and elegant, and more correct than those of Morning and Night in the Lorenzo Chapel; which, although more grand, and in unison with the composition of which they make a part, are rather majestic academical figures, than conveying any peculiar and discriminating

expression. Nevertheless, the works of Michel Angelo have a strong and marked character of their own, his thoughts are elevated, and his figures are always conceived with dignity; and if he wants the beauty and correctness of the antique, which he certainly does in an eminent degree, his faults never degrade him into feebleness; when he is not sublime he is not insipid, the sentiment of aggrandizing his subject ever prevails, and however he may fail in the execution, his works are still entitled to the first rank among the modern productions in sculpture.

Michel Angelo was educated as a sculptor, and his knowledge and practice of painting were regulated by the principles of that art; and this is an essential consideration for those who judge of his abilities as a painter. The earliest picture of his that is known, is the Holy Family in the Florentine Gallery, always supposed to have been painted in oil colours; but Abbate Lanzi has assured us, in a modern publication, that it is executed *a tempera*, which, if he be correct, leaves us without a single example of Michel Angelo's ever having painted in that process. It is a picture very low in tone, and what an English painter would call monotonous in its effect of chiar'-oscuro; but as he considered the art embracing little more than what may be obtained by sculpture, design and composition were the chief objects of his attention; if more, therefore, is not performed, more ought not to be expected. Sir Joshua Reynolds observes, that Michel Angelo, as a painter, did not possess

so many excellencies as Raffaello, but those he had were of the highest kind [r]. It has been commonly said he treated oil painting with contempt, which admits of the ornamental style to a greater extent than Fresco, and that he thought it an employment fit only for women and children. As this sentiment has been received from Vasari's time to our own with little discrimination or enquiry into the cause which gave rise to it, the passage is here translated that his opinion may be better understood.

[r] In this place it may be proper to observe, that the style of painting which in modern language is called *picturesque*, was not then known, nor the term invented; and whether, upon the whole, any thing has been gained by the discovery, might be rash to pronounce, especially in a country where all that is most valuable in painting is usually admired and estimated by that quality. It is not in painting only, but in the sister arts, that this discovery has made a complete revolution.

Sculpture and architecture, in an eminent degree, have been made picturesque from the end of the sixteenth century, when the term was invented; and we are indebted to this new principle for the great popularity of the works of Borromini, whose name I have before mentioned. In S. Romolo in Florence, the capitals of the columns have been placed at the bottom of the shaft; and in Coburg, Caryatides are represented as drunken men supporting the entablature upon flowers, and fruits carried on their heads. With some attention to this view of the subject, we may also hope for improvement in our own country. The Dragons at the base of the Monument, and of the spire of St. George's, Bloomsbury, the steeples of most of our churches, and that of St. Ann's, Soho, in particular, the latest work I am acquainted with, deserves to be noticed for the style of its composition, and the novelty of its effect. In sculpture, subsequent to the period I have mentioned, it was the leading principle of attraction; marble drapery was made to flutter in the wind, froth to foam upon the horses bit, and the nudities of Bernini were most perfect when most like the pictures of Rubens. Neither has the science of music been exempt from the contagion, and the sublimity of Handel, without regret, has been exchanged for the ornamental and *picturesque* compositions of the modern school.

Sebastiano del Piombo is well known to have been a great favourite with Michel Angelo, and from the assistance he gave him upon all occasions, has been numbered amongst his scholars. He made many designs for him which were painted in oil[a], and Michel Angelo was well satisfied with his performance; but, from circumstances not explained, Sebastiano influenced Paul III. to have the picture of the Last Judgment painted in oil colours. This conduct gave him offence, and he declared, in opposition to that influence and the Pope's determination, that he would not paint the picture unless it were to be painted in fresco. Notwithstanding this declaration Sebastiano prepared the wall for oil colours, and Michel Angelo gave himself no further concern

[a] For the church of S. Francesco in Viterbo, Sebastiano painted a picture of the Virgin and a dead Christ, and another of the scourging of Christ, for S. Pietro, in Montorio in Rome, both from the designs of Michel Angelo; but of the latter, Vasari adds, it was thought he also drew the Christ upon the wall, from the great difference between the style of that figure and the rest of the composition. "Nè tacerò che molti credono, Michelagnolo avere non solo fatto il piccolo disegno di quest' opera, ma che il Cristo detto, che e battuto alla colonna, fusse contornato da lui, per essere grandissima differenza fra la bontà di questa, e quella dell' altre figure."

Sebastiano also painted a picture of the Resurrection of Lazarus, under the direction of Michel Angelo, who corrected the design in some places; but there is no evidence that the composition was made by him, or that he executed any part of the picture. "Sebastiano fece una tavola della medesima grandezza della Trasfigurazione di Cristo, quasi a concorrenza de Raffaello, un Lazzaro quatriduano, e la sua resurrezione, la quale fu contraffata, e depinta con diligenza grandissima, sotto ordine, e disegno in alcune parti de Michelagnolo; le quali tavole finite, furono amendue pubblicamente in concistorio poste in paragone, e l'una, el'altra lodata infinitamente. E benchè le cose di Raffaello, per l'estrema grazia, e bellezza loro, non avessero pari, furono nondimeno anche le fatiche di Sebastiano universalmente lodate da ognuno." *Vita di Sebastiano Veneziano*, tom. ii. p. 471.

about it. Some months elapsed, and he was again solicited to proceed with the undertaking: he then repeated, with warmth, his former declaration, and said, that unless the plaster were all taken down, and the work to be executed in fresco, he would have nothing to do with it; that oil painting was fit only for women and those who were luxurious and idle; or, in other words, such as did not feel the excellencies of the highest style of the art, or were too lazy to practise it; which was the case of Fra. Sebastiano. The preparations were then ordered to be destroyed, and the work was executed agreeably to the original intention.

That Michel Angelo had a correct opinion and a just value for oil painting, there is sufficient evidence in the approbation he gave to Fra. Sebastiano himself, Jacopo Puntormo[t], and Marcello Venusti[u], who painted many of his designs in oil, and never in any other process: and his observations upon Titian after visiting him in the Vatican while

[t] Jacopo da Puntormo painted from the designs of Michel Angelo a composition of a Venus and Cupid, and Christ appearing to Mary Magdalen in the garden, than which, he said, no one could have executed them better. Of this artist, when Michel Angelo was shewn a picture of his, at nineteen years of age, he said, 'This young man, from what is to be seen in this specimen, if he lives and proceeds, will be able to place the art in Heaven. "Questo giovane sarà anco tale, per quanto si vede, che se vive, e sequita, porrà quest' arte in cielo." *Vita di Jacopo da Puntormo*, tom. ii. p. 645.

[u] Marcello Venusti made an infinity of small pictures from the designs of Michel Angelo; he also made a small copy of the Last Judgment, now in the possession of the king of Naples: for Messer Tommaso de Cavaliere he painted a picture of the Annunciation for the church of S. Giovanni in Laterano, from Michel Angelo's design. *Vasari*, tom. iii. p. 454.

he was painting the Danaè, will shew, if properly considered, that he neither disdained nor undervalued the merit of that mode of painting. This visit was made in company with Vasari, who says, "After we left Titian, Michel Angelo passed very high commendation on what he had seen, and said that his colouring pleased him exceedingly; but it was a pity that the Venetian painters did not ground themselves well in a correct knowledge of drawing in their youth, and adopt a better mode of study; with those advantages this man might have been as eminent in design as he is true to nature, and masterly in counterfeiting the life, and then nothing could be desired better or more perfect; for he has an exquisite perception, and a delightful spirit and manner[x]. This feeling corresponds in a high degree with the opinion of the greatest colourist our country has produced, who regrets he had not himself trod in those steps[y]; although he

[x] *V. Vita di Titiano Vecelli,* tom. iii. p. 386.

[y] "If the high esteem and veneration in which Michel Angelo has been held by all nations and in all ages, should be put to the account of prejudice, it must still be granted that those prejudices could not have been entertained without a cause: the ground of our prejudice then becomes the source of our admiration, But from whatever it proceeds, or whatever it is called, it will not, I hope, be thought presumptuous in me to appear in the train, I cannot say of his imitators, but of his admirers. I have taken another course, one more suited to my abilities, and to the taste of the times in which I live. Yet however unequal I feel myself to that attempt, were I now to begin the world again, I would tread in the steps of that great master: to kiss the hem of his garment, to catch the slightest of his perfections, would be glory and distinction enough for an ambitious man." *Sir Joshua Reynolds,* vol. ii. p. 216.

entertained some doubts whether the fascinating perfection of the Venetian style could be perfectly united with the simplicity and grandeur of the Roman school.

In one of his admirable discourses delivered to the Academy, he observes, that, "however great the difference is between the composition of the Venetian and the rest of the Italian schools, there is full as great a disparity in the effect of their pictures as produced by colours. And though in this respect the Venetians must be allowed extraordinary skill, yet even that skill, as they have employed it, will but ill correspond with the great style. Their colouring is not only too brilliant, but, I will venture to say, too harmonious to produce that solidity, steadiness, and simplicity of effect, which heroic subjects require, and which simple or grave colours only can give to a work." Sir Joshua, also, in his commendation of Ludovico Carracci, whom he considered as approaching the nearest to perfection as a painter, says, that his unaffected breadth of light-and-shadow and simplicity of colouring which holds its proper rank, does not, in his best works, draw aside the least part of the attention from the subject, and the solemn effect of that twilight which seems diffused over his pictures, appears to correspond with grave and dignified subjects, better than the more artificial brilliancy of sunshine which enlightens the pictures of Titian[z].

[z] *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, vol. i. p. 39. This opinion is amplified in a variety of instances in his literary works.

In painting the great work on which Michel Angelo's fame depends, and, taking it for all in all, the greatest work of his whole life, is the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. With respect to the colouring of this assemblage of pictures there is little attention to variety of tints, but a greatness and simplicity pervade the whole. Breadth is produced by a simple arrangement of colours, rather low in tone, without any violence of contrast, and the general effect is grand and harmonious, though not that refined and rich harmony which is produced by a variety of broken and transparent tints. As there is no detail of colours, neither is the whole work enfeebled or confused by any minute attention to the discrimination of drapery. With Michel Angelo the clothing was no particular stuff, it was only drapery; and all the attention that is here employed, is in folding and disposing of it in such a manner as to contribute to the grandeur of figure, and shew it to the utmost advantage.

It is in the Sistine Chapel where the poetical feelings of Michel Angelo are fully shewn, and where his genius and imagination are most expanded. The style and cast of the figures have nothing of common nature, but a character of grandeur peculiar to themselves proceeding from his own mind, without appearing to partake of the previous associations of other men. His Sibyls and Prophets exhibit with variety and energy the colossal powers of his mind; yet great as is the display of invention which he has there shewn, and which is to be seen through the whole of the ceiling, no

part exhibits, or more strikingly marks the range of his genius, than the smaller domestic compositions in the lunettes, where, to the most homely and familiar scenes, he has given an air of greatness, without extravagance or diminution of their natural simplicity, in a style which defies competition. Whether there was any regularly digested plan of theocracy in this assemblage of pictures is not known, as no contemporary supplies us with any information. The late professor of painting has suggested an ingenious theory upon that subject[a]: but whatever was the entire plan, which at all times may serve to amuse a speculative mind, that which is at present within the sphere of our comprehension

[a] Speaking of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, he observes, "Its subject is theocracy, or the empire of religion, considered as the parent and queen of man; the origin, the progress, and final dispensation of Providence, as taught by the sacred records. Amid this imagery of primeval simplicity, whose sole object is the relation of the race to its Founder, to look for minute discrimination of character, is to invert the principle of the artist's invention: here is only God with man. The veil of eternity is rent; time, space, and matter teem in the creation of the elements and of earth; life issues from God and adoration from man, in the creation of Adam and his mate; transgression of the precept at the tree of knowledge proves the origin of evil, and of expulsion from the immediate intercourse with God; the economy of justice and grace commences in the revolutions of the deluge, and the covenant made with Noah; and the germs of social character are traced in the subsequent scene between him and his sons; the awful synod of prophets and sibyls are the heralds of the Redeemer; and the host of patriarchs the pedigree of the Son of Man; the brazen serpent and the fall of Haman, the giant subdued by the stripling in Goliah and David, and the conqueror destroyed by female weakness in Judith, are types of his mysterious progress, till Jonah pronounces him immortal; and the magnificence of the last judgment by shewing the Saviour in the judge of man, sums up the whole, and reunites the founder and the race." *Lectures on Painting delivered at the Royal Academy*, 1801, 4to.

sufficiently serves to demonstrate that the genius of Michel Angelo was vast and sublime.

The next work he executed in painting, after a lapse of thirty years, was the celebrated Last Judgment in the same chapel, occupying the end wall where the altar is placed. From contemporary writers it would seem the public admiration of this picture when finished, was equal if not superior to the praise that had been bestowed upon the ceiling: the commendation of Varchi and Vasari is circumscribed only by their want of higher terms to express the enthusiasm of their feelings. They are not, however, peculiar in wishing that the abilities of their friend should appear to have increased with declining years; and as this was the most important of his latter works, it is easy to apologize for their desire of representing it as the most perfect.

Amidst such an assemblage of figures, some groups may reasonably be expected more admirable than others, more justly conceived, or happily executed: and it cannot be denied, that there are many parts which shew the plenitude of Michel Angelo's talents: yet, upon the whole, comparing him with himself, stupendous as it is, it rather marks the decline than the acmé of his genius. The satire of Salvator Rosa, in these lines, is well known; and though put into the mouth of the critic Biagio Martinelli, and not the sentiments of Salvator himself, yet they appear not to be wholly unfounded:

Michel' Angiolo mio, non parlo in gioco;
Questo che dipingete è un gran Giudizio:
Ma, del giudizio voi n' avete poco.

In addition to his adopting the unphilosophical notions of the darker ages, to comply with the vulgar prejudices of his time, he has also injudiciously added some needless embellishments of his own. But the most serious exception made to the general composition by his contemporaries, was that of violating decorum, in representing so many figures without drapery. The first person who made this objection was the Pope's Master of the Ceremonies above recited, who, seeing the picture when three parts finished, and being asked his opinion, told his Holiness that it was more fit for a brothel than the Pope's chapel. This circumstance caused Michel Angelo to introduce his portrait into the picture with asses ears: and not overlooking the duties of his temporal office, he represented him as Master of the Ceremonies in the lower world, ordering and directing the disposal of the damned; and, to heighten the character, he is entwined with a serpent, Dantè's attribute of Minos.

Stavvi Minos orribilmente, e ringhia:
Esamina le colpe nell' entrata,
Giudica e manda, secondo ch' avvinghia.
Dico, che quando l'anima mal nata

Li vien dinanzi; tutta si confessa:
E quel conoscitor delle peccata
Vede qual luogo d'Inferno è da essa;
Cignesi con la coda tante volte,
Quantunque gradi vuol, che giù sia messa [b].

INFERNO, Canto V.

It is recorded, that the Monsignore petitioned the Pope to have this portrait taken out of the picture, and that of the painter put in its stead; to which the Pope is said to have replied, "Had you been in Purgatory, there might have been some remedy, but from Hell 'nulla est redemptio:" this portrait still remains [c].

How far true criticism would condemn the principle upon which these objections were founded, may be deduced from the pleasure mankind has constantly received since the most cultivated æra of Greece to the present time, in the Apollo, the Venus, the Laocöon, or the Gladiator; and it can hardly be a question whether any person who has ever seen these statues could wish them to have been clothed in drapery. It must be admitted, however, that an indiscriminate appli-

[b] To examine the inmost secrets of the heart, and to judge of crimes, Minos his station takes with theatening mien, and the soul internally corrupt before him stands dismayed, confessing all. At his command Hell opens, the victims to their dire abode are sent, and each his place of torment is assigned, as round himself he girts his fiend-like tail.

[c] Plate IV. in the author's publication from the Last Judgment, *Atlas fol.*

cation of one character of muscular form and proportion, makes the whole rather an assemblage of academic figures, than a serious well studied historical composition.

Another objection made to the general design by critics less prejudiced is, the introduction of a boat to convey the condemned souls to their place of torment; the idea being manifestly borrowed from pagan theology [d].

The objection would seem to be well founded; but when

[d] The boatman in this part of the composition is designed from the Inferno of Dantè.

Charon demonio con occhi di bragia
Lor accennando, tutte le raccoglie:
Batte col remo qualunque s'adagia.
Inferno, Canto III.

The following passage has been selected, by the late Professor of Painting, as illustrative of that part of the Last Judgment where an unhappy victim, who has fallen over the side of the boat, is dragged down by a fiend, who, with a bill-hook fastened round his neck, is accomplishing his object.

E Graffiacan, che gli era più di contra,
Gli arroncigliò le 'mpegolate chiome,
E trassel su, che mi parve una Lontra.
Inferno, Canto XXII.

In the simoniacal gulph allotted to those who have been guilty of selling offices and making traffic of justice, Dantè has transformed them into monsters, and given them for their habitation a bituminous element. Those who are thus condemned ascend at intervals for respiration, while demons are on the watch to seize an exhausted victim. Thus—"Graffiacan, who descried one more immediately opposite to him, twisted the hook (*uncino* understood) in his clotted hair, and drew him up, that to me he seemed like an Otter." This quotation appears to be less apt than any of M. Fuseli's other remarks upon the advantages Michel Angelo may be reasonably supposed to have derived from Dantè.

it is considered how slightly this subject is touched in revealed religion, and how much is left to the imagination, the painter may perhaps be excused from following the example of the poets; and while the Centaurs and Sphingi of Tasso, and the Gorgons and Hydras of Milton, are tolerated in the greatest epic poems of the Christian world, I shall offer no apology for the Charon of Michel Angelo.

From the high character and notoriety of the Last Judgment, the amateur might expect at first view to receive the strongest and most sensible impressions, but in this composition the means of art best calculated for that end are least attended to. The mind is divided and distracted by the want of a great concentrating principle of effect; and the prevailing hue of colour is of too low a tone to be impressive; added to which, it is partially damaged and obscured with smoke, and is therefore now, doubtless, less harmonious, than when originally painted.

In Michel Angelo's great works his superior abilities are shewn in the sublimity of his conceptions, and the power and facility with which they are executed: correctness, in the usual signification of the word, made no part of his admired talent, and in this picture in particular his knowledge of the human figure is not marked by attention to aggregate beauty or elegance of proportion. In composition, action, and expression, he often embraces the whole range of creative power, and yet shews that inequality so often the attendant on soaring minds; for whilst his Prophets and

Sibyls in the vault of the Chapel are idealized to the utmost verge of sublimity, those perfect Beings to whom he has assigned a place in Heaven in the Last Judgment, are all copies of imperfect nature, and in FORM only elevated into grandeur by partaking of the style and character of the Torso.

The two large pictures of the Martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul conclude his labours in painting, and although they do not equal his former works, they shew the powers of the master; but are now so much injured by time, and damp from the walls on which they are painted, as to leave but little for admiration or criticism.

These pictures, of which I have spoken, are painted in fresco, and, except the Holy Family for Angelo Doni, and a picture of the same subject in the Buonarotti family, I believe no others remain: neither is it at all certain that Michel Angelo ever painted in oil; if he did, the confirmation of that opinion must rest upon the authority of these two works, as neither Vasari nor Condivi, nor any other contemporary I am acquainted with, has left us any information to decide upon that point[c]. Fresco painting was a process more adapted to his monumental style of composition, which, as it excluded attention to minute elegancies, was more favourable to grandeur of design, and it is to this process Sir

[c] The portrait he copied when a child, and smoked it to give the appearance of the original, is the strongest evidence I have met with to shew the probability of his using oil colours at any period of his life.

Joshua Reynolds very justly observes, " the fame of the greatest masters depends: such are the pictures of Michel Angelo and Raffaello in the Vatican; to which we may add the Cartoons; which, though not strictly to be called fresco, yet may be put under that denomination; and such are the works of Giulio Romano at Mantua. If these performances were destroyed, with them would be lost the best part of the reputation of those illustrious painters; for these are justly considered as the greatest efforts of our art which the world can boast. To these, therefore, we should principally direct our attention for higher excellencies. As for the lower arts, as they have been once discovered, they may be easily attained by those possessed of the former [f].

" The poetical part of the art Michel Angelo possessed in a most eminent degree, and the same daring spirit which urged him first to explore the unknown regions of the imagination, impelled him forward in his career beyond those limits

[f] It is worthy of observation, that in the corner of the picture of the Last Judgment, where Charon and the demons are painted, there is an evident attempt at glazing with advantage, and the only instance I have ever seen in fresco painting. This was the last part of the picture finished, and here Michel Angelo seems to have made some experiments in colouring; for the head, Plate IX. in the collection I published, is painted with a thick coat of colour, as if wax had been employed, and with the greatest clearness and brilliancy in the style of execution. The head of the Monsignore is also treated with a freedom and facility of manner which does not pervade his fresco works, while the head, Plate V. in the same collection, is dry and hard. This examination was expressly made, in order to gain correct information of the particulars here stated.

which his followers, destitute of the same incentives, had not strength to pass. He was the bright luminary from whom painting has borrowed a new lustre, under whose hands it assumed a new appearance, and became another and superior art, and from whom all his contemporaries and successors have derived whatever they have possessed of the dignified and majestic[g]."

About the time when he finished his labours in painting there was a great controversy in Florence among the amateurs, which of the two arts of Painting and Sculpture was the most noble; or, in other words, which required the most talent and genius; and Michel Angelo was applied to by Messer Benedetto Varchi for his opinion, which he gave in the following letter.

To M. Benedetto Varchi.

As I have received your little book, I will say a few words on the subject of your enquiry, though incompetent to the task. Of the relative importance of Painting and Sculpture, I think painting excellent in proportion as it approaches Relievo, and Relievo bad in proportion as it partakes of the character of a picture, and therefore I was used to be of opinion that painting might be considered as

[g] *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, vol. ii. p. 197.

borrowing light from sculpture, and the difference between them as the Sun and Moon. Now, however, since I have read your dissertation, which treats the subject philosophically, and shews that those things which have the same end are one and the same, I have changed my opinion, and say that, if greater judgment, labour, difficulty, and impediment, confer no dignity on the work on which it is bestowed, Painting and Sculpture may be considered without either having pre-eminence: and since it has been considered, no painter ought to undervalue sculpture, and in like manner no sculptor ought to make light of painting.

The sculptor arrives at his end by taking away what is superfluous; the painter produces his, by adding the materials which imbody the representation to the mind: however, after all, they are both produced by the same intelligence, and the superiority is not worth disputing about, since more time may be lost in the discussion than would produce the works themselves. If he who has decided that painting is more noble than sculpture, was as conversant on other subjects, my old woman would have written better. There are an infinite number of ideas that might be started upon similar subjects, which have never yet been discussed; but, as I have already observed, they would occupy too much time, and as I am not only old, but, as it were, numbered with the dead, I have little to spare, therefore I hope you will excuse me, and accept my humble thanks for the too

great honour you have done me, of which I feel myself so little deserving.

MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI[h].

In ARCHITECTURE it does not appear that Michel Angelo ever received regular instruction from any professional man, but derived his information from his own study and the use of books; nor did he consider architecture as his profession; on that account, when Paul III. appointed him to succeed San. Gallo in the building of St. Peter's, he repeatedly refused to accept the appointment[i]. The first instance that occurs of his being employed as an architect, is by Leo X. to build the façade of the church of S. Lorenzo in Florence, left unfinished by Brunelleschi, but of which, as I have before observed, there was little or nothing done during his pontificate. By Clement VII. he was commissioned to build the Laurentian library, and what was denominated the new sacristy, and a mausoleum for the Medici family, called the Capella de' Medici, neither of which, from the unsettled state of affairs in Italy, was completed till the close of his life, by Cosmo I. after his designs; and this may be with propriety considered as his first architec-

[h] Let. XVI.

[i] *Condivi*, sect. LXI.

tural work. In the new sacristy are the monuments of Giuliano and Lorenzo de' Medici [k].

The Cappella de' Medici is an octagonal room, richly incrusted with jasper, oriental agate, chalcedony, lapis lazuli, &c. to receive the remains of the Sovereign Dukes of Florence. One of the eight sides is occupied by an altar, and another with the entrance door: the six remaining sides have each a sarcophagus, similar in form to those which support the recumbent figures in the new sacristy; four are made of Egyptian, and two of oriental granite, and over them semicircular niches adapted to receive large whole-length statues; two only are occupied, but inscriptions are placed under each, to mark respectively to whom they belong [l]. This room has nothing to recommend it but its infinite labour and expence. The style of the tombs is extremely heavy, and their grandeur and simplicity destroyed by making the general form subservient to useless mouldings and ponderous scrolls.

The Laurentian library is a gallery about an hundred and fifty feet long, and thirty-five feet wide, and may be con-

[k] This new sacristy is also called the Chapel of the Princes.

[l] Cosmus Mag. Dux. Etr. I. vix. ann. LV. ob. IX. Kal. maii 1574. Franciscus Mag. Dux. Etr. II. vix. ann. 46. ob. 19 oct. 1587. Ferdinandus Mag. Dux. Etr. III. vix. ann. 60. ob. 7 feb. 1609. Cosmus Mag. Dux. Etr. IV. vix. ann. 30. ob. 26 feb. 1621. Ferdinandus Mag. Dux. Etr. V. vix. ann. 59. ob. IX. Kal. jun. 1670. Cosmus Mag. Dux. Etr. VI. vix. ann. 81. ob. 31 oct. 1723.

sidered as a plain room, simply adapted to the purpose for which it was intended [m]; to this there is a kind of anti-room crowded with architectural decoration, in a style exceedingly bad, with compound pediments and coupled columns let into the wall to support nothing, but on the contrary to weaken that part of the building in which they stand. In the antiquities of Rome I am aware that there are two examples of columns placed in niches, the one called the Sepolcro di Pesone Liciniano, on the Via Appia; and the other in a brick temple out of the Porta Latina, called, Il Tempio delle Camene, where the columns are octagonal; but no authority can authorize such a violation of principle, unless in an extreme case, where some variety may be wanted in a massive and extended wall, to produce a union of style, and harmonize it with the general character of the building of which it makes a part.

Among the architectural designs of St. Peter's, published in Bonanni's History, the section by Michel Angelo is grand [n].

[m] This library, before the French revolution, was said to contain 14,800 MSS. among which was the celebrated copy of the Pandects of Justinian, found at Amalfi about the year 1130; a Latin Bible of the sixth, and a Virgil of the fifth century, in which the four first verses beginning, *Ille ego qui quondam*, do not begin the Æneid; but *Arma virumque cano*, agreeably to the opinion of the best commentators.

[n] Bonanni has given, also designed by Michel Angelo, a confused perspective view of the front of St. Peter's, which appears to have been intended as an elevation: in other respects this design is evidently inaccurate. The lantern, agreeable to Vasari, and to the section I have already noticed, was very much like, if not the same as it is at present.

To criticise St. Peter's with any accuracy would require that all the parts should be considered as well as the whole; but without plans, elevations, and sections were given, it would not be possible to make any minute investigation intelligible; and where there is so much to commend, it has been usually considered more safe to praise than to blame.

When a nation is rich enough to have a work of vast dimensions, a sufficiency of mathematical knowledge to construct it, would of itself, produce a sort of appropriate fitness, and parts might be easily multiplied so as to create surprise. But we ought not to be deceived by specious appearances in architecture more than in any other human toil; and, although labour has its merit, and little can be produced without it, he deserves the most praise who can produce the greatest effect and the most lasting impression with the least manual exertion; but with the public at large, extent of dimension alone is always considered synonymous with grandeur, however little skill may be employed; and with the vulgar, nothing is more common than for this character to be decided by actual measurement.

Without attempting to define the different causes which make an impression of sublimity on the mind, it is an acknowledged feeling that succession and uniformity of parts, combined with greatness of dimension, contribute to that end. St. Peter's, however, in its present state, with all the advantage of dimension in every way, is a remarkable in-

stance how human ingenuity can be exercised in diminishing the effect of its own powers. Instead of the awful grandeur which might reasonably be expected from the magnitude of the building, splendour and variety divert the attention, its solemnity is lost in the diffusion of light, and its size apparently diminished by the PARTS occupying that attention which ought to be absorbed in the WHOLE. Yet this last defect has been praised by Addison, Baron Stolberg, Lumisden, and other writers; and the disappointment universally produced by its apparent want of magnitude, has been attributed by them to the exactness of its proportions. If to impress the mind with grandeur and sublimity in edifices dedicated to religion, be desirable, that building must be defective which fritters away the attention of the beholder, however beautiful the parts may be of which it is composed. The ancient Pantheon is an example of the first authority, of what can be produced by a just feeling of the true principles of architecture. There simplicity and grandeur are happily combined, though now comparatively seen in a ruined state; and however we may admire great works, or cultivate a partiality for their defects, it is obvious that the architect of St. Peter's, if he had no other merit, would deserve but little praise for making the largest and most magnificent temple in the world appear to be less sublime than the original model of its dome.

The work of Michel Angelo entitled to the highest commendation, is the cortile of the Farnese palace, and the

projecting cornice which surrounds the top on the exterior. It is, however, extremely difficult to say how much of this design belongs to him, or how much to San. Gallo. Of the cortile we know that San. Gallo carried it up to the first story, and that the construction of the rest was left to Michel Angelo by his death. Whether he altered the original design, adopted a new one, or adhered to the old, is uncertain; yet of this we may be assured, that the building as it now is, was agreeable to Michel Angelo's wishes, or he would not have constructed it. The cornice, and the general lines of the building, are such as might be expected from the predominant character of his feelings in painting and sculpture.

The galleries on the Capitoline Hill are complex, and far from being specimens of a good style. The Porta Pià, which was the simplest of three designs, and on which account Michel Angelo regretted its being adopted, is of itself a most unfortunate example of bad taste, and if the others possessed a greater variety of the same character, his reputation can suffer nothing by their loss. The prevailing notion in his mind seems to have been variety and novelty, and when Condivi bestows the most flattering encomium on the improved taste of his old age, he says, that he designed a palace for Julius III. the façade of which was "entirely original, not having embarrassed himself with the rules of his predecessors, either ancient or modern," and this kind of praise is common to Vasari, Varchi, and others.

Previous to his time the remains of ancient architecture were but little understood. The chequered black and white marble of Brunelleschi, in the exterior of public buildings, was the fashion of his day, and whatever partook of novelty in its appearance had sufficient claims to public approbation. In the same year that Brunelleschi died Bramante was born, and, with a better regulated genius than any of his predecessors, he adopted principles more simple and solid, and endeavoured to tread in the steps of the ancients. For Cardinal Wolsey he built a palace in Rome, which marks an improved taste: but a little chapel erected in the cortile of the convent of S. Pietro in Montorio, where he has copied the temple at Tivoli, with some additions of his own, shews his sense of the superior excellence of that exquisite vestige of antiquity; though he was not able to finish his building with the same perfection of design; yet, with all its defects, it is now perhaps among the best specimens of modern architecture in Rome: but the person to whom Italy was most indebted for the improvement of public taste, was Michele San Michele, of Verona [o], whose works in his native city are as honourable to his name, as those of Vicenza are to his successor the great Andrea Palladio. The taste of

[o] San Michele was born 1484, and died 1559. He was not only the best civil architect of his time, but he was the inventor of the modern system of fortification, of which Pagan, Blondel, Vauban, and others, availed themselves to obtain that distinction which is respectively attached to their names.

Michel Angelo appears to have been misled by some previous associations which it would now be in vain to seek. In a letter, addressed to a gentleman who had probably made some inquiries upon the subject of architecture, he has expressed this singular opinion: that ability in that art depended upon a knowledge of the human figure, and more especially upon anatomy.

MOST REVEREND SIR,

"WHEN a design in architecture has different parts, all equal and of the same character, the decorations ought to be of one character also, and executed in the same style; and the same rule is to be observed in corresponding parts. But when the design is entirely changed, it is not only allowable, but necessary to change its decoration; and the same principle is to be observed in the parts which are meant to correspond: the architect, however, always having full liberty to choose for himself in the first instance the style of ornament best adapted to his purpose. The nose, for example, in the middle of the face does not depend upon the one eye or upon the other; but it is necessary that the one hand should be like the other, and that both the eyes should correspond, as well with respect to each other, as to the parts of the face in which they are situated. It is also

certain, that the members of architecture have a reference to those of the human body, and he who does not understand the human figure, and particularly anatomy, can know nothing of the subject.

"MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI [p]."

It is evident from this letter that Michel Angelo theorized on some of the odd notions of Vitruvius, who makes every branch of science and knowledge subservient to architecture, and that he originally adopted the taste of his own country, without duly considering the true principles which are best adapted to make a lasting impression on the mind [p].

[p] Let. XVII.

[q] To the talents of Michel Angelo as a military architect, the celebrated Vauban bears honourable testimony. When he passed through Florence he made a plan of his fortification, and measured every part of it. *N. dell' Ed. di. R.*

To judge of Michel Angelo as a poet, I have printed in this volume a complete edition of his works, and have noticed those I thought the most important to his reputation. The first edition of these poems was printed by his great nephew, whose own poetical works are well known to those who are conversant in Italian poetry, by his La Fiera, a comedy in twenty-five acts; and La Tancia, a pastoral comedy, which has given to his name a rank among the Tuscan literati. Several sonnets were printed in his life-time, and commented on with the most extravagant praise. Varchi, upon one of them [r], has been laboriously diffuse; and, from the following letter, Michel Angelo appears to have felt himself much flattered by the compliment.

To M. Luca Martini.

" MAGNIFICENT M. LUCA,

" By the hand of M. Bartolommeo Bettini I have received your favour, with a commentary on one of my sonnets. The sonnet indeed is mine, but the commentary is from above, and is really admirable; not only according to my judgment, but according to the opinion of eminent

[r] cxix.

men, and in particular that of M. Donato Giannotti, who is never tired of reading it, and who desires to be remembered to you. As for the sonnet, I know well enough what it is; but be it as it may, I cannot conceal a little vainglory in having been the occasion of so excellent and learned a commentary, which makes me feel an importance that does not belong to me: therefore I entreat you to make the returns that are due to so much esteem, respect, and politeness. I entreat you to do this, because I feel my own unworthiness: he that has reputation ought not to tempt fortune, for it is better to be stationary than to fall from a height. I am old, and death has deprived me of juvenile thoughts; and he who does not know what old age is, let him have patience enough to wait its arrival, and then he will. Remember me to Varchi, as I have requested you; and, with the highest esteem and affection, I am ever yours[s],

"MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI."

He was eighty-one years of age when he composed the sonnet alluded to, which he sent to Vasari, with many others, as the productions of his leisure hours, and the amusement of his old age[t]. At what time he began to

[s] Let. XVIII. [t] The translation is inserted page 148.

write poetry cannot be ascertained; but it is probable that he wrote at very different periods, as subjects occurred to his mind, and as he felt disposed to imitate Petrarch; and in some instances he has been successful: the love sonnet LXX. is written with great facility, and the two religious sonnets CX. and CXVI[u]. shew that he felt the rhythm and poetical harmony of the Italian language. Though Petrarch was the sole object of his imitation, Dantè held the highest place in his esteem and admiration; but Michel Angelo looked up to him as a superior being that soared above his flight, and these two sonnets may serve to shew the reverence in which he held his character[x].

[u] These poems shew the religious feeling of Michel Angelo's mind, I have therefore translated one of them into prose, that it may be more generally understood.

CXVI.

TO THE SUPREME BEING.

My prayers will be sweet if thou lendest me virtue to make them worthy to be heard: my unfruitful soil cannot produce virtue of itself. Thou knowest the seed, and how to sow it, that will spring up in the mind to produce just and pious works: if THOU shewest him not the hallowed path, no one by his own knowledge can follow thee. Pour thou into my mind the thoughts that may conduct me in thy holy steps, and endue me with a fervent tongue, that I may alway praise, exalt, and sing thy glory.

[x] Dantè Alighiere was born at Florence in May, 1265, of an ancient and honourable family. In the early part of his life he gained some credit in a military character, distinguishing himself by his bravery in an action where the Florentines obtained a signal victory over the citizens of Arezzo. He became still more eminent by the acquisition of civil honours, and at the age of thirty-five he rose to be one of the chief magistrates of Florence, where that dignity was conferred by the suffrages of the people. From

LXXII.

DANTE.

He from the world into the blind abyss
Descended and beheld the realms of woe;
Then to the seat of everlasting bliss,
And God's own throne, led by his thought sublime,
Alive he soared, and to our nether clime
Bringing a steady light, to us below
Revealed the secrets of eternity.
Ill did his thankless countrymen repay

this exaltation the poet himself dated his principal misfortunes. Italy was at that time distracted by the contending factions of the Ghibelines and Guelphs, among the latter Dantè took an active part. In one of the proscriptions he was banished, his possessions confiscated, and he died in exile on the 14th of September, 1321.

The person and manners of Dantè are thus described by Boccacio. "Fu adunque questo nostro Poeta di mezzana statura; e poichè alla matura età fu pervenuto, andò alquanto gravetto, ed era il suo andar grave, e mansueto, di onestissimi panni sempre vestito, in quello abito, che era alla sua matura età convenevole; il suo volto fu longo, il naso aquilino, gli occhi anzi grossi, che piccioli, le mascelle grandi, e dal labbro di sotto, era quel di sopra avanzato; il colore era bruno, i capelli, e la barba spessi neri e crespi, e sempre nella faccia malinconico e pensoso——Ne costumi publici e domestici mirabilmente fu composto e ordinato; più che niuno altro cortese e civile; nel cibo e nel poto fu modestissimo."

Although Michel Angelo never imitated this great poet, it is sufficiently obvious through his works in painting that the poetical mind of Dantè influenced his feelings. The Demons in the Last Judgment, which I have before remarked, with all their mixed and various passions, may find a prototype in La Divina Commedia. The figures rising from the grave mark his study of L' Inferno e il Purgatorio, and the subject of the

The fine desire, that which the good and great
So often from the insensate many.. meet.
That evil guerdon did our Dantè find.
But gladly would I, to be such as he,
For his hard exile and calamity
Forego the happiest fortunes of mankind.

LXXIII.

DANTE.

How shall we speak of him, for our blind eyes
Are all unequal to his dazzling rays?
Easier it is to blame his enemies
Than for the tongue to tell his lightest praise.

Brazen Serpent must remind every reader of Canto XXV. dell' Inferno, where the flying serpents, the writhing and contortions of the human body from envenomed wounds, are described with pathos and horror; and the execution of Haman is doubtless designed from these lines:

Poi piovve dentro all' alta fantasìa
Un crocifisso dispettoso e fiero
Nella sua vista, e cotal si morìa:
Intorno ad esso era 'l grande Assuero,
Ester sua sposa, e'l giusto Mardocheo,
Che fu al dire ed al far così 'ntero.

Il Purgatorio, Canto xvii.

For us did he explore the realms of woe;
And at his coming did high Heaven expand
Her lofty gates, to whom his native land
Refused to open hers. Yet shalt thou know,
Ungrateful city, in thine own despite,
That thou hast fostered best thy Dantè's fame;
For virtue when oppressed appears more bright,
And brighter therefore shall his glory be,
Suffering of all mankind most wrongfully,
Since in the world there lives no greater name.

The mode in which he composed his poetry I have had an opportunity of knowing from his MSS. of which I have seen many. They were written on loose neglected scraps of paper, on which sketches and memoranda had been previously made: by the favour of the same gentleman to whom I have before acknowledged my obligation, I am enabled to add a fac-simile of one of these compositions as originally written; and, as it is inserted in his printed works, it may be interesting to the curious to compare his first thoughts with the various alterations that took place on being committed to the press*. Of this original poem I have subjoined a prose translation.

* The paper on which this poem was written was covered with designs and studies of various kinds, and among them a sketch of Hercules strangling Anteus, probably for

TRANSLATION.

Alas! Alas! the mirror which tells truth to all,
Tells me that I am old,
And warns me of my fleeting days:
Thus it comes to him who loves delay
As now 'tis come to me, whose time is flown,
And like me finds himself in years.
Although fast pacing on, Death treads upon my steps,
No warning has its due effect, repentance sleeps,
Nor preparation made the great event to meet.
Enemy to myself;
Nor is there solace to be found in pride or lamentation.
He who loses time can know no greater loss.

Alas! Alas! I do repeat,
That in the time that's past, I do not find
A single day in all that I can call mine own.

the group he modelled in wax for Lione Lioni Aretino, and the same composition as the small plaster cast which goes under Michel Angelo's name.

The MS. from which this fac-simile was made, as well as the letter inserted page 178, were obtained in Florence, in the revolution of 1798, by Mr. Otley, with many valuable drawings from the collection of the Buonarroti family, where they had been preserved until he became possessed of them.

o ch̃e o ch̃e chiuso tracto
dagiorni mie fugaci e dallo specchio
che l uerdice accolarsi̅ & fiso iguardar
Cosi nasce chi troppo assai ritarda
Come facto che l tempo me fuggito
si truoua come me nō giorno uecchio
no mi posso pentir ne mapparechio
no mi Consiglio & lamorte appresso
ne muco di me stesso
uno tal mote ipianti e sospiri uerso
& nō e danno pari a lo tempo p so

O ch̃e o ch̃e pur ritornando
uol mie passato tempo enō ritruouo
intricto un giorno & sie stato mio
le fallace speranze e chiā de sio
piangendo amāolo ardendo e sospirā do
cha ffecto a le ū mortal nō me pur mouo
marmo tenuto on de l Conosco e pruouo
lontā Certo da luero
or Compriglio pero

Ch̄ l breue tempo me uenuto mā co
ne ſauie amor ſe ſa lūgaſſi ſtanco
uo laſſo olme ne ſo ben dou
anzi temo chul ueggio e ltempo andato
me lmo ſtar ne muar ch̄ g ho chi cm da
or che ltempo laſcorza cangia emuda
camorte elalma mſue me o gnior faī pruoue
ca prima ela ſecōda delmie ſtato
e ſio nō ſo no errato
ch̄ duol ueglia ch̄ ſia
ch̄ eterna pena mia
ne cmal libero inteſo oprato uero
ueggo ſignior ne ſo quel chuo mi ſpero
chul uer conoſcie chbor daqual parte
nō abbe ſcuſa apreſſo addio ne parte

Fallacious hopes and vain desires,
With every varying passion,
Have made me sensible to every change,
And taught me how to know the human heart,
From whence may come what may,
And be no longer new.

Tired I go, alas! but do not well know where.
Fear appals me, for my sand is run,
And winter's frost I feel through all my limbs:
Daily I see my frame decay,
Nor would it aught avail to see it not.
Death and the soul divide our hopes and fears,
As each for victory contend;
Nor in all the works that I have done,
Nor understanding that I have used,
Know what to hope.
But where eternal punishment's the law of God,
I hope I'm not deceiv'd, nor do mistake his will.

He who the truth has known, and made a devious course,
Has no excuse, nor can his favour share[y].

[y] In the printed edition of his works these two last lines are omitted. See cvii, cviii, cix.

The Canzone XLVII. has considerable merit, and is valuable, as it would seem to shew Michel Angelo's feelings and sensibility on the most interesting of the human passions. The pastoral poem CXXXVIII. which, from the title, appears to be incomplete, is a composition highly interesting from his pen; and although it may be found to contain but little novelty of thought, yet it is a true resemblance of nature, and a just representation of the effects which most strikingly characterize the extremes of civilization, produced by the tranquillity of the cottage, and the thirst of wealth and power. To the English versions already given I subjoin the following sonnet, which is exceedingly beautiful.

SONNET X.

Yes! hope may with my strong desire keep pace,
And I be undeluded, unbetray'd;
For, if of our affections none find grace
In sight of Heaven, then wherefore hath God made
The world which we inhabit? Better plea
Love cannot have than that in loving thee:
Glory to that eternal Peace is paid,
Who such divinity to thee imparts
As hallows and makes pure all gentle hearts.
His hope is treacherous only, whose love dies

With beauty, which is varying every hour.
But in chaste hearts, uninfluenced by the power
Of outward change, there blooms a deathless flower
That breathes on earth the air of Paradise.

Those who wish to judge of Michel Angelo's poetical talents with more accuracy, have an opportunity, in this volume, by referring to the original poems.

To my friends Southey and Wordsworth I am indebted for the translations that enrich my work, and they have performed their part with a facility that does honour to their poetical powers, which it would be useless for me to praise: for this favour I am the more indebted, as the task of translation is the most unthankful of all literary labour, and in poetry most difficult to accomplish with success; for what is bad can never be made good, and that which is good can seldom be improved.

Of the Sonnets, Religion and Love are the prevailing subjects: in the former Michel Angelo is sometimes very successful; in the latter he is either monotonous or quaint; a jargon of Platonism and crude metaphysical divinity, acquired from the prevailing taste of the times, with little mind and no sensibility, supply the place of real feeling. He who only imagines that he loves, is sure to be mistaken; and that which is worthless to himself, is still more cold and insipid to others.

From the facts I have stated, and the opinions founded upon data which I believe to be true, it would be useless to multiply words in summing up the character of this great man. All short modes of defining complicated powers are fallacious, however dexterously language may be employed to give antithesis the force of wit or the air of profound sagacity. By studying his works alone Michel Angelo is thoroughly to be known. His genius was vast and wild, by turns extravagant and capricious, rarely to be implicitly followed, but always to be studied with advantage. Those who have hitherto taken him for their guide seized what came within the sphere of gross representation, and caricature was the only result of their feeble efforts. Extravagance, not borrowed from nature, nor the result of feeling, may for a time astonish vulgar minds; but that which is like nothing that can be seen or understood, will perish with the author, by whatever ingenious means it may be made to assail the public taste. Sprangher and Goltzius have been long dead, and wherever such artists may arise, they will now no longer serve to disgrace the genius of Michel Angelo, who has been but too often censured for their folly.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX,

Containing a List of the Outlines, with References; engraved by Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, from the Works of Michel Angelo Buonarroti.

SCULPTURE.

Bacchus, executed for Jacopo Galli, p. 22.

La Pieta, executed for Cardinal Rovano, p. 22.

David, made by the order of the Gonfaloniere Soderini, p. 25.

Christ, made for Messer Antonio Metelli, p. 81.

La Madonna, in the new sacristy of S. Lorenzo, in Florence, p. 102.

The Monument of the Duke Giuliano de' Medici, p. 102.

The Monument of the Duke Lorenzo de' Medici, p. 102.

One of the Statues intended for the Monument of Julius II. p. 111.

Another intended for the same Monument, p. 111.

Besides these two statues, there are four others merely abbozzi of the same character, which now support the roof of a grotto in the Boboli gardens.

TITIUS. This design was made for a Roman gentleman, whom Vasari calls Messer Tommaso de' Cavalieri: it has been copied in a gem, and given by Spence in his Polymetis; there is a large basso-relievo of it in the Villa Borghese, in Rome. It has also been engraved with a landscape background by Antonio Salamanca, with this inscription, TITIUS GIGAS A VULTURE DIVERSISQUE PŒNIS LACERATUS. *Vasari*, tom. iii. p. 309.

PLATE XI. This composition appears to have been intended for an Altar. The outline was copied from a scarce print published or engraved by Antonio Salamanca (*Ant. Sala. Excudebat*) without a date. Salamanca was a considerable printseller in Italy (1540), and published many of the works engraved after Michel Angelo; but with connoisseurs it is not certain whether he himself ever engraved. At that period engraving, printing, and printselling, were often united in the same person; and it is difficult, by the Latin word succeeding the proper name, to know precisely what meaning was intended; but in this instance the preter-imperfect tense being used, would seem to imply a modest diffidence of his own abilities, which could alone with propriety refer to his talents; yet it is very probable that Salamanca may have kept a manufactory similar to our great manufactories of engraving in London, putting his name to his works in whatever manner was most agreeable to himself.

PLATE XII. This design and the two following were made for the celebrated Vittoria Colonna, Marchioness of

Pescara. The earliest print I have seen of this composition is engraved by Julio Bonasoni, 1546. There is another, with a slight variation, dated 1547, with the initials NB. supposed to be engraved by Nicolo Beatrici. The peculiar Cross in the back-ground is meant to represent one which was carried in Florence, in a religious procession in the great plague of 1348, and afterwards deposited in the church of S. Croce. In the original drawing, upon the shaft of the Cross was printed, NON VE SI PENSA QUANTO SANGUE COSTA. There is another print of this subject, with the date 1579, with this inscription, TORCULAR CALCAVI SOLUS, probably chosen from Isaiah by the engraver. It is a very inferior print to either of the others.

CHRIST, WITH THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA AT THE WELL. "Quisquis bibit ex aquâ istà, sitiet rursus; quisquis autem biberit ex aquâ illâ quam ego ei dabo, non sitiet in æternum; sed aqua illa, quam ego dabo ei, fiet in eo fons aquæ salientis in vitam æternam."

THE CRUCIFIXION. "Et horâ nona clamavit Jesus voce magnâ, dicens: ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?—Stabant autem juxta crucem Jesu, mater ejus, et soror matris ejus."—

These three compositions are all noticed by Vasari. *Vite de Pittori, &c.* tom. iii. p. 314.

HOLY FAMILY, painted for Angelo Doni in Florence, and preserved in the Florentine Gallery. Of this picture there is no print. p. 27.

DEAD CHRIST. This design was made by Michel Angelo for Sebastiano del Piombo, who painted it for an altar in a private chapel in the church of S. Francesco in Viterbo, where the picture now remains: like the former, it has not been engraved in any other way than in the annexed outline. *Vasari*, tom. ii. p. 470.

CHRIST SCOURGED. This composition was made for Sebastiano del Piombo, and painted by him in the church of S. Pietro in Montorio, where it still remains in good preservation. The best print from this picture has a similar monogram to that on the column in the annexed outline. *Vasari*, tom. ii. p. 471.

THE ANNUNCIATION. The original drawing was made for Messer Tommaso de' Cavaliere, and afterwards painted by Marcello Venusti for the church of S. Gio. in Laterano, where the picture is still preserved. There is a very bad print from it by J. Rossi, published in Rome 1726. *Vasari*, tom. iii. p. 454.

This design of Michel Angelo probably had its origin in the description of the same subject by Dantè in basso-relievo.

" Esser di marmo candido, ed adorno
D' intagli sì, che non pur Policleto,
Ma la natura lì avrebbe scorno.
L'angel, che venne in terra col decreto
Della molt' anni lagrimata pace,

Ch' aperse 'l ciel dal suo lungo divieto,
Dinanzi a noi pareva sì verace,
Quivi intagliato in un atto soave,
Che non sembiava immagine che tace.
Giurato si saria, ch'el dicesse AVE:
Però ch' ivi era immaginata quella,
Ch' ad aprir l'alto amor volse la chiave."

Il Purgatorio, Canto x.

A HOLY FAMILY. There are three old prints of this subject, with a slight variation in each: the one from which the outline was copied is the best, and more in Michel Angelo's style of drawing. In the Borghese Palace, in Rome, is a small picture of this composition, supposed to be painted by Marcello Venusti.

ST. JEROM. This outline is copied from an old print engraved in Michel Angelo's lifetime, and from the following inscription the subject appears also to have been painted by Marcello Venusti, M. ANG. IN. MARCEL. PIN. *Seb. a Reg. do. incid.* ROMÆ M. D. LVII. *con privilegio.* The print was published by Antonius Lafrerii Sequinus, who, with Antonio Salamanca, published almost all the prints engraved after Michel Angelo's works.

THE RAPE OF GANIMEDES. This design Michel Angelo made for his friend Messer Tommaso de' Caveliere. Of this composition there are many prints; but one, executed much better than the rest, has this inscription, GANIMEDIS JU-

VENIS TROIANUS RAPTUS A JOVE. In Kensington Palace there was formerly a large picture of this subject, probably painted by some contemporary artist. *Vasari*, tom. iii. p. 309.

A HOLY FAMILY. Of this design there is a print engraved by Philip Sericcus, and published by Antonio Lafreri, in Rome, 1565.

CHRIST HEALING THE SICK. "Occidente autem sole, omnes qui habebant infermos morbis variis, ducebant ipsos ad eum: ille verò unicuique ipsorum impositis manibus, sanavit eos." This is one of the compositions probably intended for the Sistine chapel, if the plan had been carried into execution of ornamenting the side walls with pictures by Michel Angelo. There is an old print of this subject, engraved by Ferando Berteli, 1566.

THE PROPHET JEREMIAH. This was most probably an early sketch for the same subject in the Sistine chapel. The oldest print of this composition is engraved by Niccolo Beatrici, 1547.

A GROUP OF FIGURES SHOOTING AT A TARGET. Whether this composition was intended merely as a study for the action of shooting with the bow, or an allegorical subject, is not known. The print from which the outline was made, was published by Antonius Lafrerii Sequinus, most probably in Michel Angelo's lifetime; but I have been informed by M. Cosway, that there is extant an earlier print, engraved in wood, with the head of the Terminus representing Michel

Angelo's own portrait; if this be not an addition of the engraver, it would seem to imply an intention in the design to allude to the enemies and calumniators of his fame; and it is well known that the subject of S. Sebastian has been more than once adopted by other painters to gratify a similar feeling.

AN OLD MAN IN A GO-CART. Of this subject I have two different prints: one without any year of publication or engraver's name; the other, with the date 1538, engraved or printed by Antonio Salamanca, with this inscription at the bottom of the print, TAMDIU DISCENDUM EST QUAMDIU VIVAS BIS PUERI SENES.

THE CEILING OF THE SISTINE CHAPEL. This outline comprehends all the subjects painted on the ceiling, with their distribution and the architectural decoration, which is painted in chiar'-oscuro. The ceiling is 171 palms 8 inches long, and 59 palms 5 inches wide, which in English numbers would be 125 feet 9 inches, by 43 feet 6 inches.

An Enumeration of the Portraits of Michel Angelo, either in Painting, Sculpture, or Engraving, executed in his lifetime.

GIULIANO Bugiardini painted his portrait at the request of Ottaviano de' Medici, and Michel Angelo also sat to

Jacopo del Conte, but what is become of these pictures is not known. The former was doubtless a very indifferent performance, for Bugiardini was an artist of mediocrity, and if the following anecdote be correct, it must have been a very inaccurate likeness. After Michel Angelo sat two hours, Bugiardini requested him to look at it; upon which he burst into laughter, and asked him, What he could have been thinking of to place one eye in the temple? But the poor painter, after re-examining and comparing his picture with the original, not being able to see the defect, Michel Angelo facetiously told him, "That if his picture was correct, Nature must have made the mistake;" and requested him to proceed.

"Avendo poi segretamente il detto M. Ottaviano pregato Giuliano, che gli ritraesse Michelagnolo Bonarroti, egli messovi mano, poi ch' ebbe tenuto due ore fermo Michelagnolo, che si pigliava piacere de' ragionamenti di colui, gli disse Giuliano: Michelagnolo, se volete vedervi, state su, che già ho fermo l' aria del viso. Michelagnolo rizzatosi, e veduto il ritratto, disse ridendo a Giuliano? Che diavolo avete voi fatto? voi mi avete dipinto con uno degli occhj in una tempia: avvertitevi un poco. Ciò udito, poichè fu alquanto stato sopra di se Giuliano, ed ebbe molte volte guardato il ritratto, ed il vivo, rispose sul saldo: A me non pare, ma ponetevi a sedere, ed io vedrò un poco meglio dal vivo, s'egli è così. Il Bonarroti, che conosceva, onde veniva il difetto, ed il poco giudizio del Bugiardini, si rimise subito a sedere

ghignando. E Giuliano riguardò molte volte, ora Michelagnolo, ed ora il quadro, e poi levato finalmente in piedi, disse: A me pare, che la cosa stia siccome io l' ho disegnata, e che il vivo mi mostri così. Questo è dunque, soggiunse il Bonarroti, difetto di Natura: seguitate, e non perdonate al pennello, nè all' arte. E così finito questo quadro." *Vasari vita di Giuliano Bugiardini*, tom. iii. p. 617.

In the small copy of the Last Judgment by Marcello Venusti, Michel Angelo's portrait is introduced in the left-hand corner of the picture, which is not painted in fresco, in the Sistine chapel.

The best authenticated portrait known of Michel Angelo, is a bust in bronze preserved in the Capitol; which, Vasari says, was executed by Daniello da Volterra. It was given to the senate of Rome by the celebrated Borioni, and by Clement XII. placed in the collection of sculpture, where it now is. This is the same bust Bartolozzi copied for the author's work from the Last Judgment (Atlas fol.), but by mistake it is there ascribed to a scholar of Michel Angelo, Bartolommeo Amanati. The marble bust in his monument is by Battista Lorenzi.

Lione Lioni Aretino, a sculptor and particular friend of Michel Angelo, made his portrait on a medallion, a strong likeness, and executed with great spirit. On the reverse of the medal was a blind man led by a dog, circumscribed with this motto, DOCEBO INIQUOS VIAS TUAS, ET IMPII AD TE CONVERTENTUR. With this work Michel Angelo

was highly pleased, and gave Aretino in return several of his own designs, and a model in wax of Hercules strangling Anteus.

Gori had in his possession a portrait of Michel Angelo in an emerald paste, given to him by Sig. Luigi Syzies on his return from Paris, where he acquired it. He has engraved it at the head of the preface of his edition of Condivi, but has not given any sufficient data to establish its originality.

Several portraits of Michel Angelo were engraved in his lifetime. One, a three quarter face in an ornamented oval, by Giorgio Mantouano, under which are the following lines:

Michael Angelus Bonarota
Tuscorum flos delibatus,
Duarum artium pulcherrimarum
Humanae vitae vicariarum
Picturae statuariaeque
Suo penitus seculo extinctarum
Alter inventor faciebat.

A profile, in a circle, by Giulio Bonasoni, with this inscription:

MICHAEL . ANGELVS . BONAROTVS . PATRICIVS
FLORENTINVS . AN. AGENS . LXXII.
QVANTVM IN NATVRA ARS NATVRAQVE POSSIT IN ARTE
HIC QVI NATVRAE PAR FVIT ARTE DOCET.
M. D. XLVI.

A profile, in a square, without any engraver's name, with this inscription:

MICHAEL . ANGELVS . BONAROTVS . NOBILIS
FLORENTINVS . AN. AET. SVÆ . LXXI.
QVI . SIM . NOMEN . HABES . SATQ . EST . NAM . CETERA . CVI . NON
SVNT . NOTA . AVT . MENTEM . NON . HABET . AVT . OCVLOS.
M. D. XLV.

A profile in a plain unornamented oval, circumscribed. MICHAEL ANGELUS BONAROTUS PATRICIUS FLORENTINUS SCULTOR PICTOR ET ARCHITECTUS UNICUS; and under the oval, AN. AGEN. LXXI. 1545.

Of these three prints the first is much the best; and, although the second has a prior date, it appears to have been engraved from the same original; and the third is a very inferior copy of it.

The portrait facing the title page of this work was engraved by Mr. Bartolozzi, just before he left England, from a profile prefixed to Gori's edition of Condivi; the original of which was a drawing in the Buonarroti collection in Florence, supposed to have been made by Giulio Bonasone, and probably the same from which he himself engraved his print.

THE END.

RACCOLTA

DI LETTERE SCRITTE

DI

MICHEL ANGELO BUONARROTI.

RACOLTA

DI LETTERE SCRITTE, &c.

I.

A M. Silvestro da Montauto e Compagni.

Del pagamento delle tre figure di marmo, che ha fatte, ovver finite Raffaello da Monte Lupo scultore, vi resta in deposito scudi cento settanta di moneta, cioè di dieci giulj l' uno, e avendole detto Raffaello, come è detto, finite, e messe in opera a S. Pietro in Vincola nella sepoltura di Papa Giulio, sarete contenti per ultimo suo pagamento pagargli a suo piacere i sopraddetti cento settanta scudi, perchè ha fatto tutto quello, a che s' era obbligato delle tre figure dette, cioè una nostra Donna col Putto in braccio, un Profeta, e una Sibilla, tutte qualcosa più del naturale.

Vostro Michelagnolo Bonarroti.

II.

A Pietro Aretino.

Magnifico Messer Pietro mio Signore e fratello. Io nel ricevere della vostra lettera ho avuto allegrezza, e dolore insieme. Sonmi molto allegrato per venir da voi, che siete unico di virtù al Mondo, e anco mi sono assai doluto, perciocchè avendo compita gran parte dell' istoria non posso mettere in opera la vostra immaginazione, la quale è sì fatta, che se il dì del Giudicio fosse stato, e voi l' aveste veduto in presenza, le parole vostre non lo figurerebbero meglio. Ora per rispondere allo scrivere di me, dico, che non solo l' ho caro, ma vi supplico a farlo, dacchè i Re, e gl' Imperadori hanno per somma grazia, che la vostra penna li nomini. In questo mezzo se io ho cosa alcuna, che vi sia a grado, ve la offerisco con tutto il cuore. E per ultimo il vostro non voler capitare a Roma, non rompa per conto del veder la pittura, che io faccio, la sua deliberazione, perchè sarebbe pur troppo. E vi mi raccomando.

III.

A Messer Bartolommeo.

E' non si può negare, che Bramante non fosse valente nell' architettura, quanto ogni altro, che sia stato dagli Antichi in quà. Egli pose la prima pietra di S. Pietro, non piena di confusione, ma chiara, e schietta, e luminosa, ed isolata attorno, in modo che non noceva a cosa nessuna del palazzo; e fu tenuta cosa bella, come ancora è manifesto, in modo che chiunque si è discostato da detto ordine di Bramante, come ha fatto il Sangallo, si è discostato dalla verità; e se così è, chi ha occhi non appassionati, nel suo modello lo può vedere. Egli con quel circolo, che fa di fuori, la prima cosa toglie tutti i lumi alla pianta di Bramante, e non solo questo, ma per se non ha ancora lume nessuno a tanti nascondigli fra di sopra, e di sotto i cori, che fanno comodità grande ad infinite ribalderie, con tener segretamente banditi, far monete false &c. in modo che la sera, quando detta chiesa si serrasse, bisognerebbero 25. a cercare chi vi restasse nascosto dentro, e con fatica si troverebbe. Ancora ci sarebbe questo altro incoveniente, che nel circuire, con l' aggiunta che il modello fa di fuora, detta composizione di Bramante, saria forza di mandare in terra la cappella di Paolo, le stanze del Piombo, la Ruota, e molte altre; nè la cappella di Sisto credo che riuscirebbe netta. Circa la parte fatta del circolo di fuora, che dicono,

che costa centomila scudi, questo non è vero, perchè con sedici mila si farebbe; e rovinandolo, poco cosa si perderebbe, perchè le pietre fattevi, e i fondamenti non potrebbero venire più a proposito; e meglio rerebbesi la fabbrica 200. mila scudi, e 300. anni di tempo. Questo è quanto a me pare, a senza passione, perchè il vincere mi sarebbe grandissima perdita. E se potete far intendere questo al Papa, mi farete piacere, che non mi sento bene.

Vostro Michelagnolo Bonarroti.

IV.

A M. Giorgio Vasari.

M. Giorgio mio caro, circa al rifondare a S. Piero Montorio, come il Papa non volle intendere, non ve ne scrissi niente, sapendo voi essere avvisato dall' uomo vostro di quà. Ora mi accade dirvi quello, che segue, e questo è, che jermattina, sendo il Papa andato a detto Montorio, mandò per me. Riscontrailo in sul ponte, che tornava. Ebbi lungo ragionamento seco circa le sepolture allogatevi, & all' ultimo mi disse, ch'era risoluto non volere mettere dette sepolture in su quel monte, ma nella chiesa de' Fiorentini. Richiesemi di parere, e di disegno, & io ne lo confortai assai, stimando, che per questo mezzo detta

chiesa s'abbia a finire. Circa le vostre tre ricevute non ho penna da rispondere a tante altezze, ma se avessi caro di essere in qualche parte quello, che mi fate, non l'arei caro per altro, se non perchè voi aveste un servidore, che valesse qualcosa. Ma io non mi maraviglio, sendo voi risuscitatore di uomini morti, che voi allunghiate la vita ai vivi, ovvero, che i mal vivi furiate per infinito tempo alla morte; e per abbreviare, io son tutto come sono, vostro.

Roma 1. Agosto 1550.

MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI.

V.

AL MEDESIMO.

M. GIORGIO mio caro, subito che Bartolommeo fu giunto quà, andai a parlare al Papa, e visto che voleva far rifondare a Montorio per le sepolture, provveddi d' un muratore di S. Piero. Il Tantecose lo seppe, e volsevi mandare uno a suo modo. Io per non combattere con chi dà le mosse a' venti, mi son tirato a dreto, perchè essendo uomo leggiero, non vorrei essere traportato in qualche macchia. Basta che nella chiesa de' Fiorentini non mi pare, s' abbia più a pensare. Tornate presto, e state sano. Altro non mi accade.

A di 13. Ottobre 1550.

MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI.

VI.

A Cosimo Primo Dūca di Firenze.

Illustrissimo Sig. Duca di Firenze.

I Fiorentini hanno avuto già più volte grandissimo desiderio di far quà in Roma una bella chiesa di S. Giovanni Ora in tempo di V. S. Illma sperando averne più comodità se ne sono risoluti, e hanno fatto cinque uomini di ciò, i quali m' hanno più volte richiesto, e pregato di disegno di detta chiesa. Sappiendo io, che Papa Leone dette già principio a detta chiesa, ho risposto loro, non ci volere attendere senza licenza del Duca di Firenze. Ora come si sia stato, ho avuto una lettera molto graziosa da V. S. la quale la tengo per comandamento espresso, che io attenda a detta fabbrica, che n' avrà piacere grandissimo. Honne fatto di già più disegni, fra' quali a' sopraddetti Deputati n'è piaciuto uno, il quale si manderà a V. S. e tanto s' eseguirà, quanto piacerà a quella. Duolmi assai essere vecchio, e sì maldaccordo con la vita, che poco posso prometter di me per detta fabbrica. Farò per V. S. con tutto il cuore quel poco, che potrò, e a quella mi raccomando.

Roma.

Michelagnolo Bonarroti.

VII.

A M. Giorgio Vasari.

M. Giorgio amico caro, circa la scala della Libreria, di che m' è stato tanto parlato, crediate, che se io mi potessi ricordare, come io l'avevo ordinata, che io non mi farei pregare. Mi torna bene nella mente come un sogno una certa scala, ma non credo, che sia appunto quella, che io pensai allora, perchè mi torna cosa goffa. Pure la scriverò qui, cioè che io togliessi una quantità di scatole aovate, di fondo d'un palmo l' una, ma non d' una lunghezza, e larghezza, e la maggiore e prima ponessi in sul pavimento lontana del muro della porta tanto, quanto volete, che la scala sia dolce, o crude; e un' altra ne metessi sopra questa, che fusse tanto minore per ogni verso, che in sulla prima di sotto avanzasse tanto piano, quanto vuole il piè per salire, diminuendole e ritirandole verso la porta fra l' una e l' altra, sempre per salire: e che la diminuzione dell' ultimo grado sia, quant' è l' vano della porta, e detta parte di scala aovata abbia come due ale una di quà & una di là, che vi seguitino i medesimi gradi, e non aovati. Di questa, serva il mezzo per il signore dal mezzo in su di detta scala, e le rivolte di dette ale ritornino al muro. Dal mezzo in giù insino in sul pavimento, si discostino con tutta la scala dal muro circa tre palmi, in modo che l' imbasamento del ricetto non sia occupato in luogo nessuno, e resti libera ogni

faccia. Io scrivo cosa da ridere, ma so ben, che voi troverete cosa a proposito.

Roma 15. Settembre 1550.

MICHELAGNOLO BUONARROTI.

VIII.

AL MEDESIMO.

M. GIORGIO amico caro, io chiamo Iddio in testimonio, come io fui contra mia voglia con grandissima forza messo da Papa Paulo terzo nella fabbrica di S. Pietro di Roma dieci anni sono, e se si fusse seguitato fino a oggi di lavorare in detta fabbrica, come si faceva allora, io sarei ora a quello di detta fabbrica, che io desidererei tornarmi costà; ma per mancamento di danari, ella s'è molto allentata, e allentasi, quando ell'è giunta in più faticose e difficili parti; in modo che abbandonandola ora, non sarebbe altro, che con grandissima vergogna e peccato perdere il premio delle fatiche, che io ho durate in detti dieci anni per l' amor di Dio. Io vi ho fatto questo discorso per risposta della vostra, e perchè ho una lettera del Duca, che m' ha fatto molto maravigliare, che sua Signoria si sia degnata a scrivere con tanta dolcezza. Ne ringrazio Dio, e S. E. quanto so e posso. Io esco di proposito, perchè ho perduto la memoria e 'l cervello, e lo scrivere m' è di grande affanno, perchè

non è mia arte. La conclusione è questa di farvi intendere quel, che segue dello abbandonare la sopraddetta fabbrica, e partirsi di quà: la prima cosa contenterei parecchi ladri, e sarei cagione della sua rovina, e forse ancora del serrarsi per sempre.

MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI.

IX.

A MESSER LIONARDO BONARROTI.

Io vorrei più presto la morte, ch' essere in disgrazia del Duca. Io in tutte le mie cose m' ingegno d' andare in verità; e se io ho tardato di venire costà, come ho promesso, io ho sempre inteso con questa condizione, di non partir di quà, se prima non conduco la fabbrica di S. Pietro a termine, ch' ella non possa esser guasta, nè mutata dalla mia composizione, e di non dare occasione di ritornarvi a rubare, come solevano, e come ancora aspettano i ladri. E questa diligenza ho sempre usata, e uso, perchè come molti credono, e io ancora, esservi stato messo da Dio; ma il venire a detto termine di detta fabbrica non mi è ancora, per esser mancati i denari, e gli uomini, riuscito; ed io, perchè son vecchio, e non avendo a lasciar altro di me, non

l' ho voluta abbandonare; e perchè servo per l' amor di Dio, in lui ho tutta la mia speranza, &c.

Roma 1. Luglio 1557.

MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI.

X.

A M. GIORGIO VASARI.

M. GIORGIO amico caro, io ho ricevuto il libretto di M. Cosimo, che voi mandate, e in questo sarà una di ringraziamento. Pregovi, che gliene diate, e a quello mi reccomando. Io ho avuto a questi di gran disagio, e spesa, e gran piacere nelle montagne di Spoleti a visitare que' romiti, in modo che io son ritornato men che mezzo a Roma, perchè veramente e' non si trova pace se non ne' boschi. Altro non ho che dirvi. Mi piace che stiate sano, e lieto, e mi vi raccomando. De' 18. di Settembre 1556.

MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI.

XI.

Al Medesimo.

Dio il voglia, Vasari, che io la tenga a disagio qualche anno; e so che mi direte bene che io sia vecchio e pazzo a voler fare sonetti; ma perchè molti dicono che io sono rimbambito, ho voluto fare l' ufficio mio. Per la vostra veggo l' amore che mi portate, e sappiate per cosa certa che io avrei caro di riporre queste mie deboli ossa accanto a quelle di mio padre, come mi pregate; ma partendo di quà, sarei causa d' una gran rovina della fabbrica di S. Pietro, d' una gran vergogna, e d' un grandissimo peccato; ma come sia stabilita che non possa esser mutata, spero far quanto mi scrivete, se già non è peccato a tenere a disagio parecchi ghiotti, che aspettano mi parta presto.

Michelagnolo Bonarroti.

XII.

Al Signor Cardinale di Carpi.

Messer Francesco Dandini mi ha detto jeri, che V. S. Illustriss. e Reverendiss. gli disse, che la fabbrica di. S. Pietro non poteva andar peggio di quello, che andava,

cosa che veramente mi è molto doluta, sì perchè Ella non è stata informata del vero, come ancora perchè io (come debbo) desidero più di tutti li altri uomini, ch' ella vada bene, e credo, se io non mi gabbo, poterlo con verità, assicurare, che per quanto in essa ora si lavora, ella non potrebbe meglio passare. Ma perchè forse il proprio interesse, e la mia grave vecchiezza mi possono facilmente ingannare, e così contro l' intenzione mia far danno, o pregiudizio alla prefata fabbrica, io intendo (come prima portò) domandar licenza alla Santità di N. S. anzi per avanzar tempo, voglio supplicare, come fo, V. S. Illustriss. e Reverendiss. che sia contenta liberarmi da questa molestia, nella quale per li comandamenti de' Papi, come Ella sa, volentieri sono stato gratis 17. anni, nel qual tempo si può manifestamente vedere, quanto per opera mia sia stato fatto nella suddetta fabbrica; tornandola efficacemente a pregare di darmi licenza, che per una volta non mi potrebbe fare la più singolar grazia; e con ogni riverenza umilmente bacio le mani di V. S. Illustriss. e Reverendiss.

MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI.

Casa 13. Settembre 1560.

XIII.

A. M. Giorgio Vasari.

M. Giorgio mio caro, io posso male scrivere, pur per risposta della vostra lettera dirò qualche cosa. Voi sapete come Urbino è morto, di che m' è stato grandissima grazia di Dio, ma con grave mio danno, e infinito dolore. La grazia è stata, che dove in vita mi teneva vivo, morendo m' ha insegnato morire non con dispiacere, ma con desiderio della morte. Io l' ho tenuto 26. anni, & hollo trovato rarissimo e fedele, ed ora, che lo avevo fatto ricco, e che io l' aspettavo bastone e riposo della mia vecchiezza, mi è sparito, nè mi e rimasta altra speranza, che di rivederlo in Paradiso. E di questo n' ha mostrato segno Iddio per la felicissima morte, che ha fatto, che più assai che 'l morire, gli è incresciuto lasciarmi in questo mondo traditore con tanti affanni, benchè la maggior parte di me n' è ita seco, nè mi rimane altro che una infinita miseria; e mi vi reccomando.

Michelagnolo Bonarroti.

XIV.

SIGNOR MARCHESE.

E' non pare, sendo io in Roma, ch' egli accadesse lasciare il crocifisso a M. Tomao, e farlo mezzano fra V. S. e me suo servo, acciocchè io la serva, e massime avendo io desiderato di far più per quella, che per uomo, che io conoscessi mai al mondo. Ma l'occupazione grande, in che sono stato, e sono, non ha lasciato conoscer questo a V. S. E perchè io so, che ella sa, ch' amore non vuol maestro, e che chi ama non dorme, manco accadeva ancora mezzi. E benchè paresse, che io non mi ricordassi, io faceva quello, che io non diceva per giungere con cosa non aspettate. E' stato guasto il mio disegno.

Mal fa chi tanta fe sì tosto oblia.

MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI.

XV.

A NICCOLÒ MARTELLI.

MESSER Niccolò, ho avuto da M. Vincenzo Perini una vostra lettera con due sonetti, e un madrigale. La lettera e 'l sonetto diretto a me son cosa mirabile, tal che nes-

suno potrebbe esser tanto ben gastigato, che in loro trovasse cosa da gastigare; vero è che mi danno tante lodi, che s' io avessi il Paradiso in seno, molte manco farebbono abbastanza. Veggo, che vi siete immaginato, ch' io sia quello, che Dio il volesse, ch' io lo fosse. Io sono un povero uomo, e di poco valore, che mi vo affaticando in quell' arte, che Dio m' ha data, per allungar la vita mia il più che in posso, e così come io sono, son servidor vostro, e di tutta la Casa de' Martelli. E della lettera, e de' sonetti vi ringrazio, ma non quanto sono obbligato, perchè non aggiungo a si alta cortesia.

M. Angelo Bonarroti.

XVI.

A M. Benedetto Verchi.

M. Benedetto, perchè e' paja pur che io abbia ricevuto, come io ho, il vostro libretto, risponderò qualche cosa a quel che mi domandate, benchè ignorantemente. Io dico, che la Pittura mi par più tenuto cattivo, quanto più va verso il rilievo, ed il rilievo più tenuto cattivo, quanto più va verso la Pittura; e però a me soleva parere, che la Scultura fosse la lanterna della Pittura, e che dall' una all' altra fosse quella differenza, che è dal Sole alla Luna. Ora

poi che io ho letto nel vostro libretto, dove dite, che, parlando filosoficamente, quelle cose, che hanno un medesimo fine, sono una medesima cosa, io mi son mutato d' oppinione, e dico, che se maggior giudizio, e difficultà, impedimento, e fatica non fa maggiore nobilità; che la Pittura, e Scultura è una medesima cosa, e perchè ella fusse tenuta così, non doverebbe ogni Pittore far manca di Scultura, che di Pittura, e il simile lo Scultore di Pittura. Io intendo Scultura, quella che si fa per forza di levare; che quella che si fa per via di porre, è simile alla Pittura. Basta che venendo l' una, e l' altra da una medesima intelligenza, cioè Scultura, e Pittura, si può far fare loro una buona pace insieme, e lasciar tante dispute, perchè vi va più tempo, che a far le figure. Colui, che scrisse, che la Pittura era più nobile della Scultura, se egli avesse così ben intese l' altre cose, che egli ha scritte, l' averebbe meglio scritte la mia fante. Infinite cose, e non più dette ci sarebbe da dire di simili scienze; ma come ho detto, vorrebbon troppo tempo, e io ne ho poco, perchè non solo son vecchio, ma quasi nel numero de' morti; però priego, che m' abbiate per iscusato, e a voi mi raccomando, e vi ringrazio quanto so, e posso del troppo onor, che mi fate, e non conveniente a me.

Vostro Michelagnolo Bonarroti.

In Roma.

XVII.

SIGNORE REVERENDISSIMO.

QUANDO una pianta ha diverse parti, tutte quelle, che sono a un modo di qualità, e quantità, hanno e essere adorne in un medesimo modo, e d' una medesima maniera, e similmente i lororiscontri. Ma quando la pianta muta del tutto forma, è non solamente lecito, ma necessario mutare dal detto ancora gli adornamenti, e similmente i loro riscontri; e i mezzi sempre sono liberi, come vogliono. Siccome il naso, che è nel mezzo del viso, non è obbligato nè all' uno, nè all' altro occhio, ma l' una mano è bene obbligata a essere come l' altra, e l' uno occhio come l' altro per rispetto degli lati, e de' riscontri; e però è cosa certa, che le membra dell' architettura dipendono dalle membra dell' uomo. Chi non è stato, o non è buon maestro di figure, e massime di notomia, non se ne può intendere.

MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI.

XVIII.

A M. Luca Martini.

Magnifico M. Luca, ho ricevuto da M. Bartolommeo Bettini una vostra con un libretto, comento d' un sonetto di mia mano. Il sonetto vien bene da me, ma il comento viene dal Cielo; e veramente è cosa mirabile non dico al giudizio mio, ma degli uomini valenti, e massimamente di M. Donato Giannotti, il quale non si sazia di leggerlo, e a voi si raccomanda. Circa il sonetto io conosco quello, che egli è; ma come si sia, non mi posso tenere, che io non ne pigli un poco di vanagloria, essendo stato cagione di sì bello, e dotto comento; e perchè nell' autore di detto sento per le sue parole, e lodi d' esser quello, che io non sono, prego, che voi facciate per me parole verso di lui, come si conviene a tanto amore, affezione, e cortesia. Io vi prego di questo, perchè mi sento di poco valore; e chi è in buona opinione, non debbe tentar la fortuna, e meglio è tacere, che cascare da alto. Io son vecchio, e la morte m' ha tolti i pensieri della gioventù, e chi non sa che cosa è la vecchiezza, abbia tanta pazienza che v' arrivi, che prima nol può sapere. Raccomandatemi come ho detto, al Varchi, come suo affezionatissimo, e delle sue virtù, e al suo servizio dovunque io sono.

In Roma.

Michel' Agnolo Bonarroti.

XIX.

A M. Giorgio Vasari.

Georgio amico caro, io ho preso grandissimo piacere della vostra, visto che pur vi ricordate del povero vecchio; e più per esservi trovato al trionfo, che mi scrivete d'aver visto nascere un altro Buonarroto, del quale avviso vi ringrazio quanto so e posso, ma ben mi dispiace tal pompa, perchè l' uomo non dee ridere, quando il mondo tutto piange; però mi pare, che Lionardo non abbia a fare tanta festa d' uno, che nasce, con quella allegrezza, che s' ha a serbare alla morte di chi è ben vissuto. Nè vi maravigliate, se non rispondo subito: lo fo per non parere mercante. Ora io vi dico, che per le molte lodi, che per detta lettera mi date, se io ne meritassi sol una, mi parrebbe, quand'io mi vi detti in anime & in corpo, avervi dato qualcosa, e aver sodisfatto a qualche minima parte di quel che io vi son debitore; dove vi ricognosco ogni ora creditore di molto più, che io non ho da pagare; e perchè son vecchio, oramai non spero in questa, ma nell' altra vita potere pareggiare il conto, però vi prego di pazienza, e son vostro; e le cose di quà stan pur così.

Roma.

Michelagnolo Bonarroti.

XX.

Alla Cornelia.

Io m' ero accorto, che tu t' eri sdegnata meco, ma non trovavo la cagione. Ora per l' ultima tua mi pare aver inteso il perchè. Quando tu mi mandasti i caci, mi scrivesti, che mi volevi mandare più altre cose, ma che i fazzoletti non erano ancor forniti; e io perchè non entrassi in ispesa per me, ti scrissi, che tu non mi mandassi più niente, ma che mi richiedessi di qualche cosa, che mi faresti grandissimo piacere, sappiendo, anzi dovendo esser certa dell' amore, ch' io porto ancora a Urbino benchè morto, e alle cose sue. Circa al venir castà a vedere i putti, o mandar quì Michelagnolo, è bisogno, ch' io ti scriva, in che termine io mi trovo. Il mandar quà Michelagnolo non è al proposito, perchè sto senza donne, e senza governo, e il putto è troppo tenero per ancora, e potria nascerne cosa, ch' io ne sarei molto malcontento, e dipoi c' è ancora, che 'l Duca di Firenze da un mese in quà, sua grazia, fa gran forza, ch' io torni a Firenze con grandissime offerte. Io gli ho chiesto tempo tanto, ch' io acconci quà le cose mie, e che io lasci in buon termine la fabbrica di S. Pietro; in modo che io stimo star quà tutta questa state; e acconce le cose mie, e le vostre circa al monte della Fede, questo verno andermene a Firenze per sempre, perchè son vecchio,

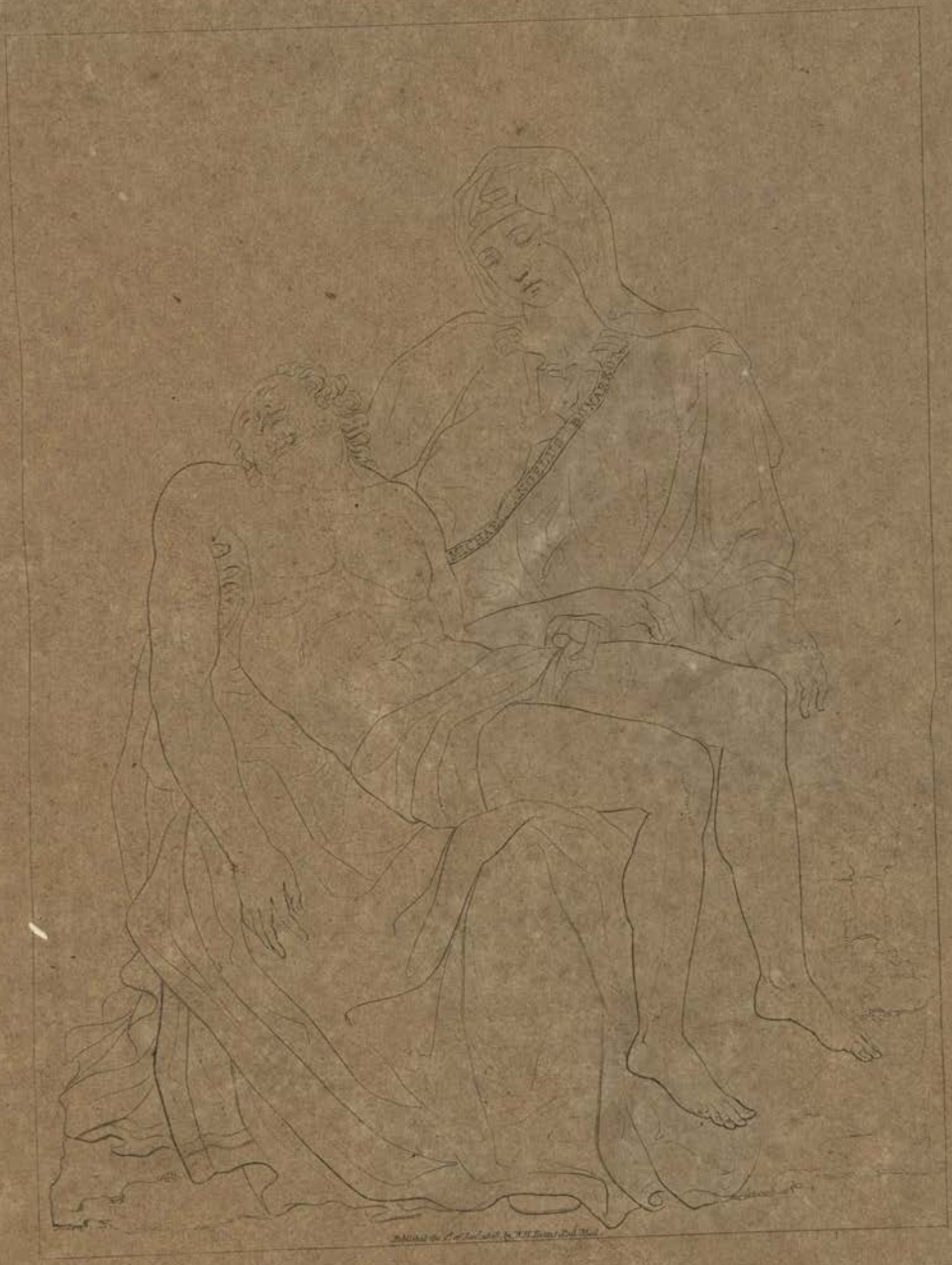
e non ho tempo di più ritornare a Roma; e passerò di costà, e volendomi dar Michelagnolo, lo terrò in Firenze con più amore, che i figliuoli di Lionardo mio nipote, insegnandogli quello che io so, che 'l padre desiderava, ch' egli imparasse. Jeri adì venti sette di Marzo ebbi l' ultima tua lettera.

In Roma.

MICHELAGNOLO BONARROTI.

Published the 2nd of Jan.y 1806, by R.H. Evans, Pall Mall.

BACCHUS



LA PIETÀ

Published the 1st of Jan.y 1806, by R.H. Evans. Pall Mall.

DAVID

Published the 1st of Jan.y 1806, by R.H.Evans, Pall Mall.

CHRIST

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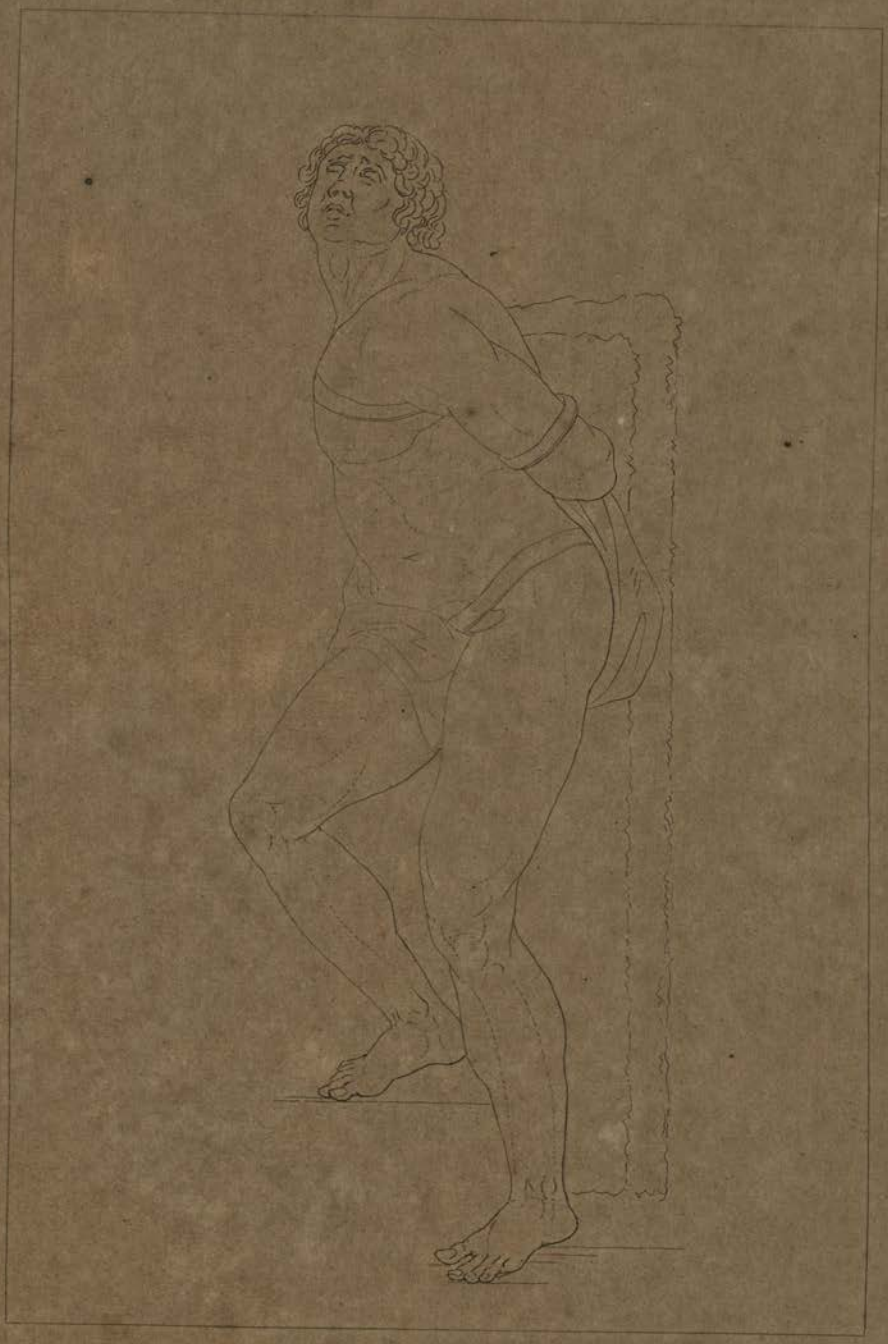
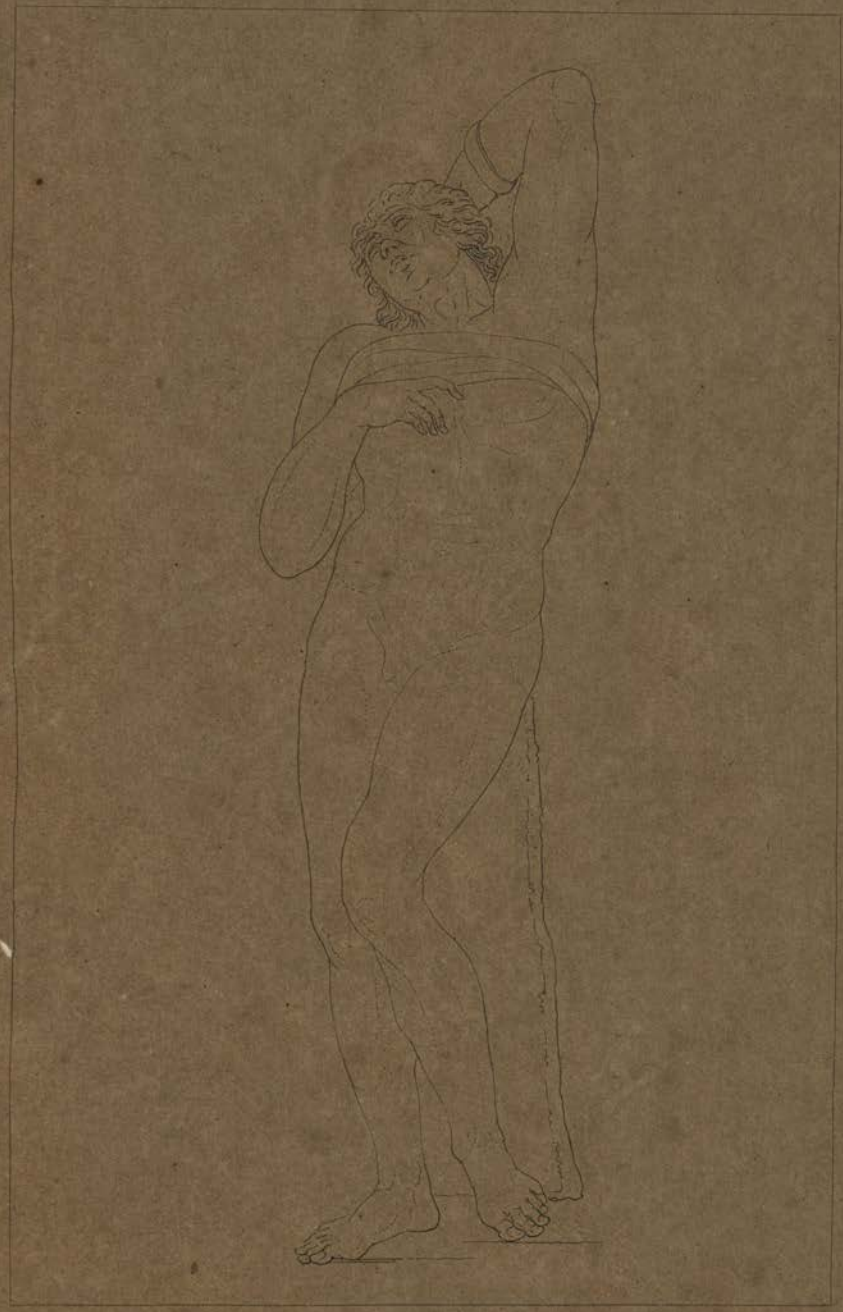
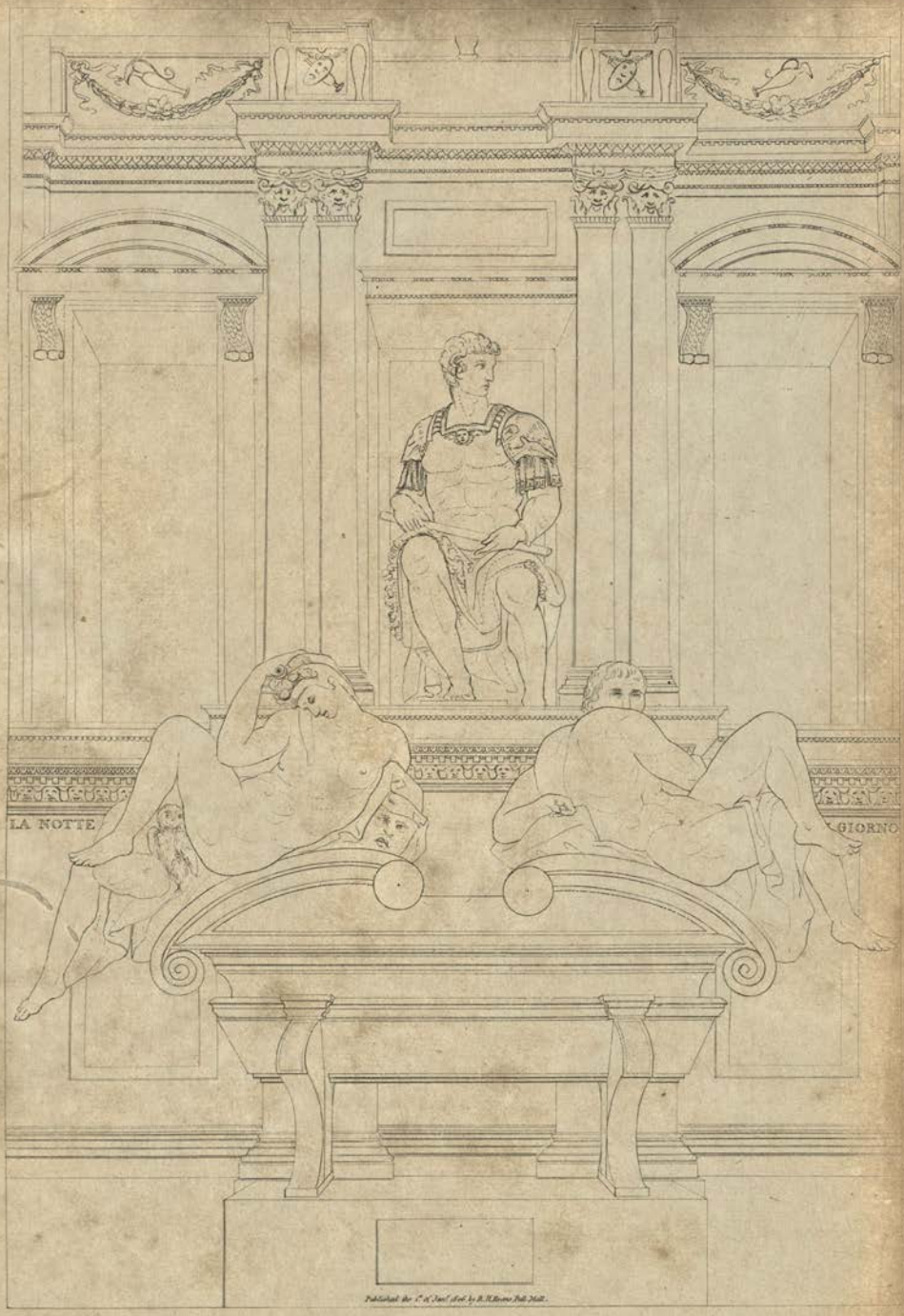
LA MADONNA



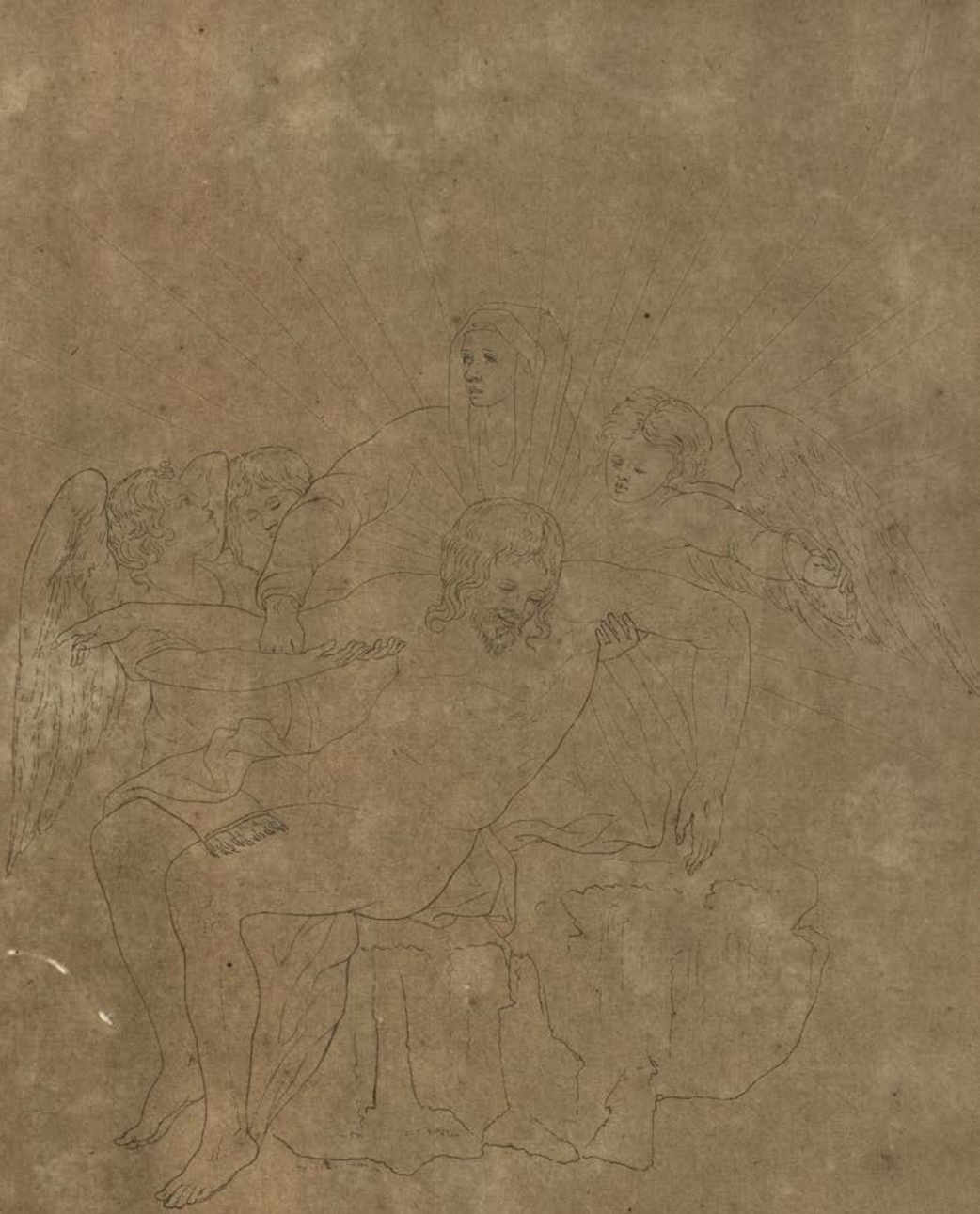




THE MONUMENT OF DUKE GIULIANO DE' MEDICI

THE MONUMENT OF DUKE LORENZO DE' MEDICI

TITUS



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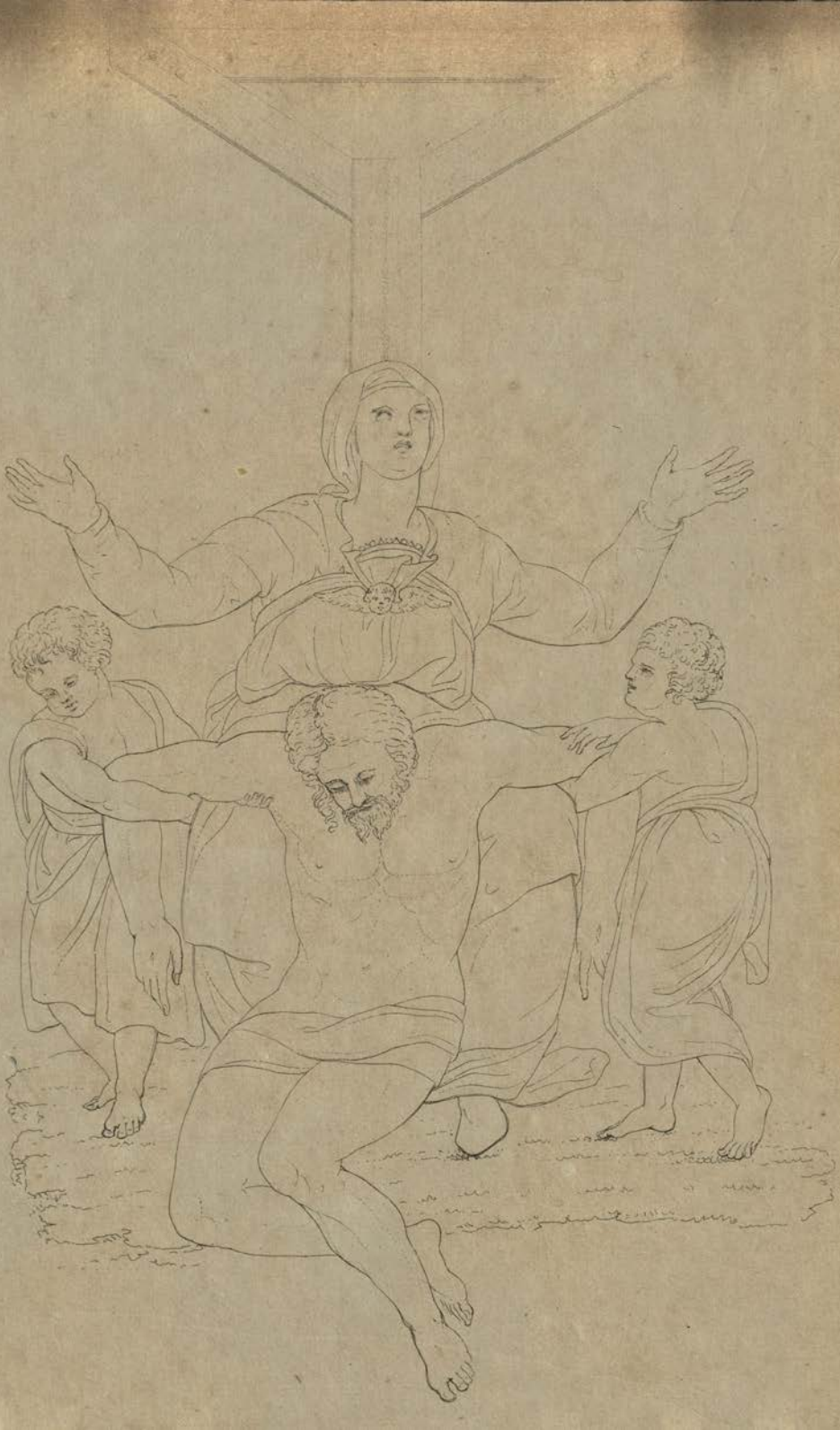
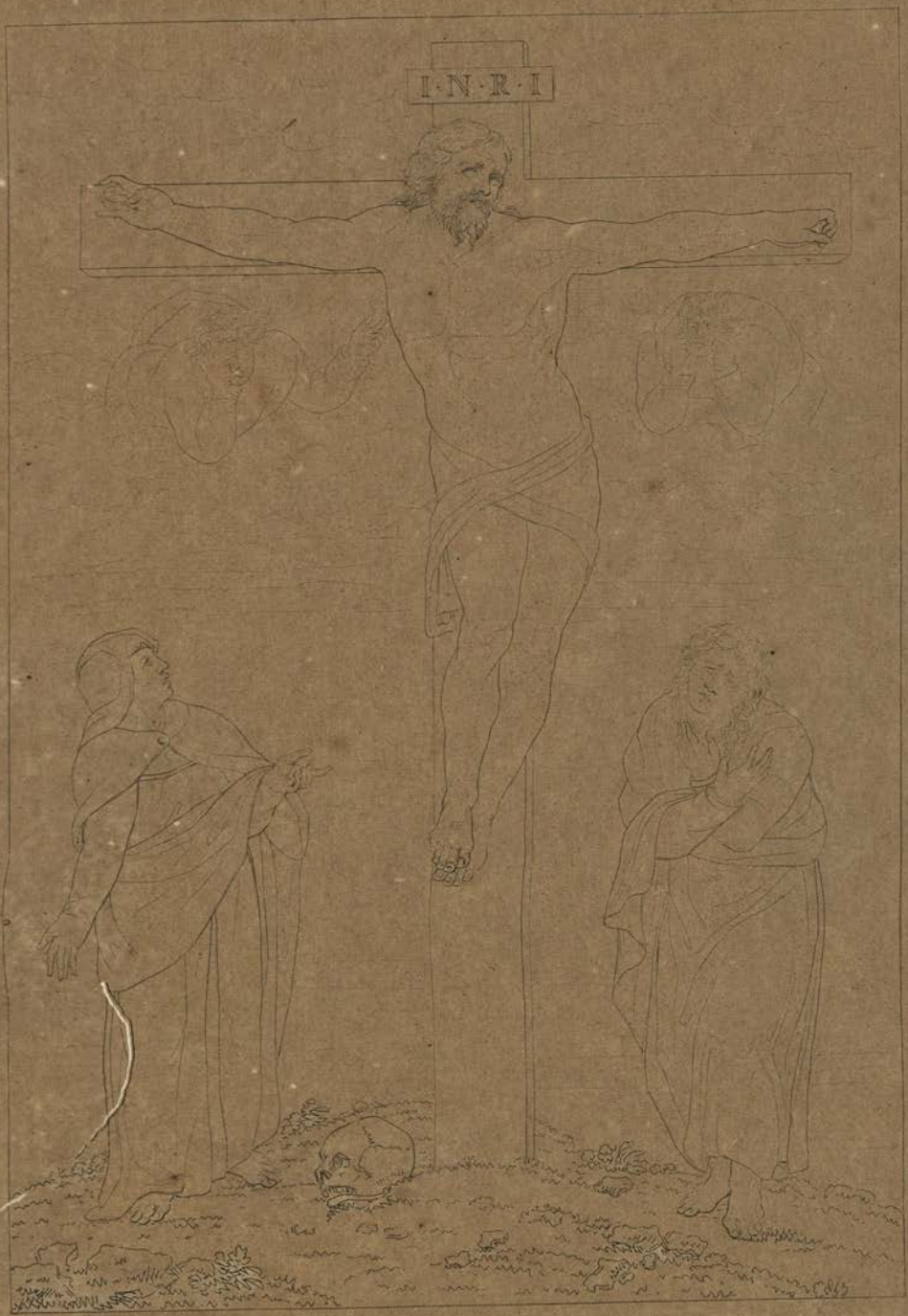


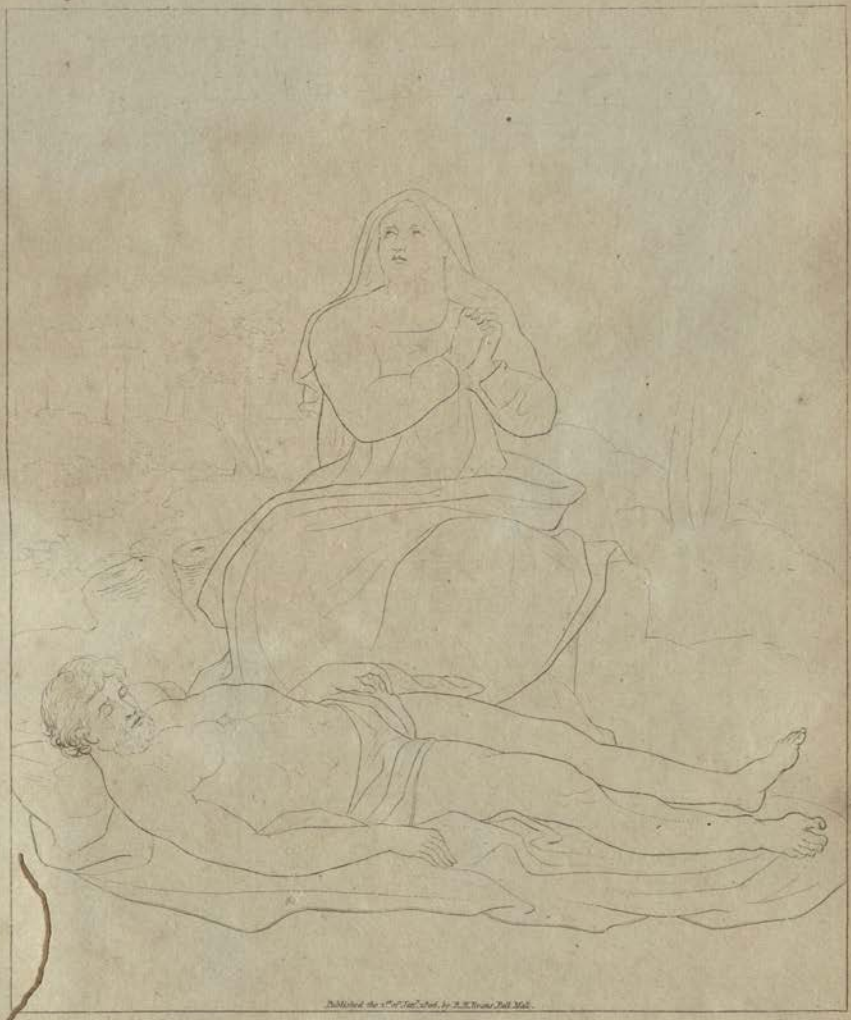
CHRIST WITH THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA AT THE WELL

CHRIST WITH THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA AT THE WELL

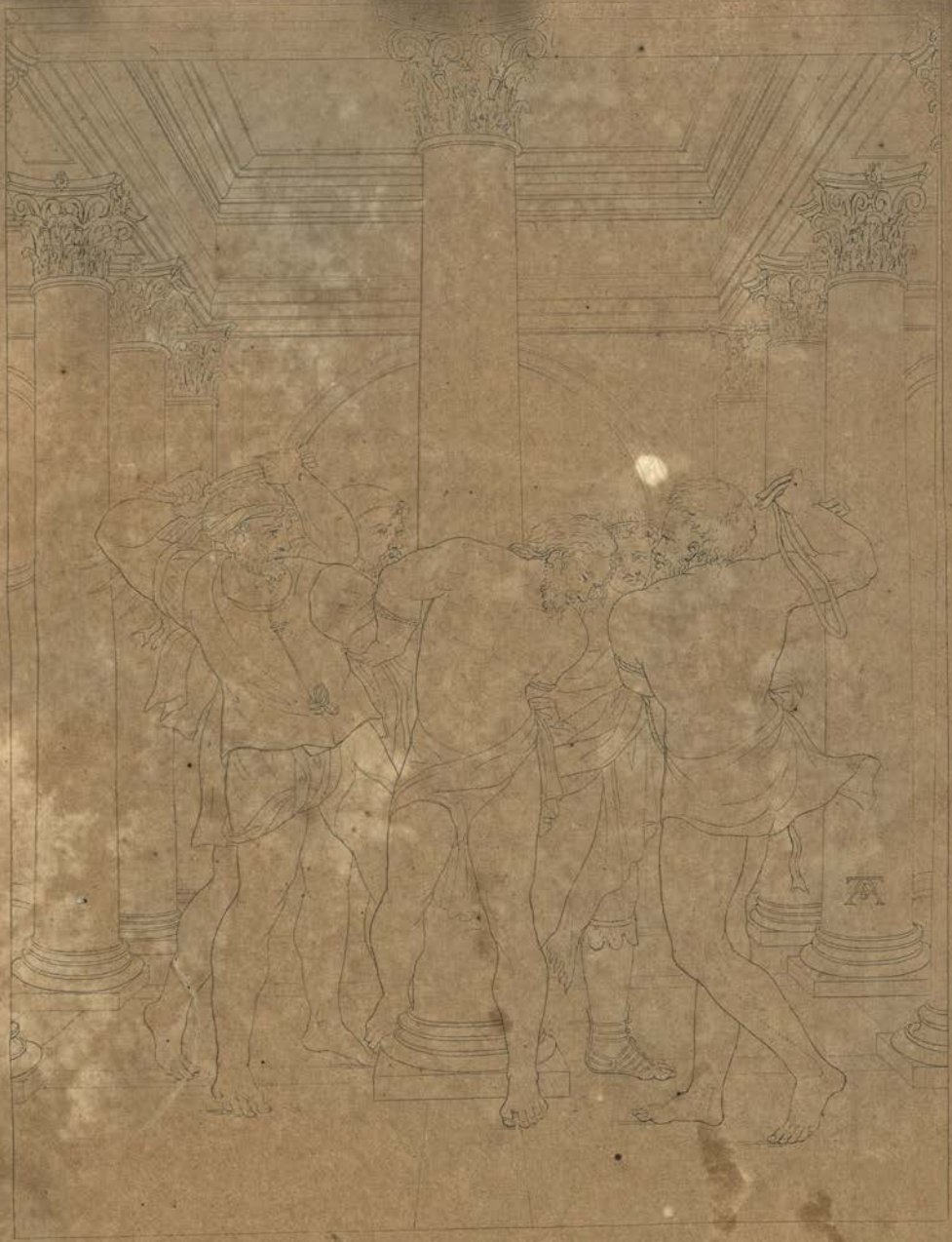


CRUCIFIXION

HOLY FAMILY



DEAD CHRIST



CHRIST SCOURGED

ANNUNCIATION

Published the 1st of Jan.y 1816, by B. H. Evans, Pall Mall.

DORMIENTE PVERO IESV DIVINA MENS VIGILAT

St. JEROM

Published the 1st of Jan.y 1806 by R. H. Evans, Pall Mall.

GANYMEDES

NE EXCITETIS FVERVM DORMIENTEM QVIDEM
CORPORE ANIMO VERO VIGILANTEM

CHRIST HEALING THE SICK

Published the 1st Jan.y 1806 by R. H. Evans Pall Mall.

JEREMIAH

AN CHORA INPA RO

E CEILING OF THE SISTINE CHAP

E CEILING OF THE SISTINE CHAPEL

RIME

DI

MICHEL ANGELO BUONARROTI.

THE following Poems of Michel Angelo Buonarroti are printed verbatim, and in the same order they were originally published by his Nephew, with this title, 'RIME DI MICHELAGNOLO BUONARROTI RACOLTA DA MICHELAGNOLO SUO NIPOTE. In Firenze appresso i Giunti con licenzia de' superiori. M. DC. XXIII.'

RIME

DI

MICHEL ANGELO BUONARROTI.

I.

Non ha l'ottimo artista alcun concetto
Ch'un marmo solo in se non circoscriva
Col suo soverchio, e solo a quello arriva
La man che obbedisce all' intelletto.
Il mal ch'io fuggo, e'l ben ch'io mi prometto
In te donna leggiadra, altera, e diva
Tal si nasconde; e per ch'io più non viva
Contraria ho l' arte al desiato effetto.
Amor dunque non ha, ne tua beltate,
O fortuna, o durezza, o gran disdegno
Del mio mal colpa, o mio destino, o sorte,
Se dentro del tuo cor morte, e pietate
Porti in un tempo, e ch'l mio basso ingegno
Non sappia ardendo trarne altro che morte.

II.

Non vider gli occhi miei cosa mortale
Quando refulse in me la prima face
De i tuoi sereni, e in lor ritrovar pace
L'alma sporò, che sempre al suo fin sale.
Spiegando, ond' ella scese, in alto l' ale,
Non pure intende al bel ch'a gli occhi piace;
Ma perche è troppo debile e fallace
Trascende in ver la forma universale.
Io dico ch' all' huom saggio quel che muore
Porger quiete non può; nè par s' aspetti
Amar ciò che fa'l tempo cangiar pelo.
Voglia sfrenata è'l senso, e non amore,
Che l' alma uccide. Amor può far perfetti
Gli animi quì, ma più perfetti in Cielo.

III.

La forza d'un bel volto al Ciel mi sprona
(Ch' altro in terra non è che mi diletti)
E vivo ascendo tra gli spirti eletti;
Grazia ch' ad huom mortal raro si dona.
Sì ben col suo fattor l' opra consuona,
Ch' a lui mi levo per divin concetti.
E quivi informo i pensier tutti, e i detti
Ardendo, amando per gentil persona.

Onde, se mai da due begli occhi il guardo
Torcer non sò, conosco in lor la luce,
Che mi mostra la via ch' a Dio mi guide.
E se nel lume loro acceso io ardo,
Nel nobil foco mio dolce riluce
La gioia che nel Cielo eterna ride.

IV.

Se sempre è solo, e un, quel Sol, che muove
E tempera, e corregge l' universo,
Non sempre a noi si mostra per un verso,
E grazie spande variate e nuove.
A me in un modo, ad altri in altro, e altrove
Riluce, e più, e men sereno, e terso,
Secondo l' egritudin che disperso
Ha l' intelletto alle divine piove.
Così più chiaro splende, e più s' appiglia
Donna gentil tuo volto, e tuo valore
Nel cor ch'è più capace, e vi s' imprime.
Ma se scarsa virtù l' alma ne piglia,
E' che del lume tuo l' alto splendore
Soverchia 'l vaso, e le mie forze opprime.

V.

Molto diletta al gusto intero, e sano
L' opra della prim' arte, che n' assembra
I volti, e gli atti, e con sue vive membra
Di cera, o terra, o pietra un corpo umano.
Se poi 'l tempo ingiurioso aspro, e villano
Lo rompe, o storce, o del tutto dismembra,
La beltà che prim' era si rimembra
Dentro 'l pensier che non l'accolse in vano.
Similemente la tua gran beltade,
Ch' esempio è di quel ben che 'l Ciel fa adorno,
Mostroci in terra dall' artista eterno,
Venendo men col tempo, e con l' etade,
Tanto aurà più nel mio desir soggiorno,
Pensando al bel ch' età non cangia, o verno.

VI.

La vita del mio amor non è 'l cuor mio;
Che l' amor di ch'io t' amo è senza cuore,
Là volto, ove mortal pieno d'errore
Affetto esser non può nè pensier rio.
Amor nel dipartir l'alma da Dio
Occhio sano mè fece, e tè splendore,
Nè sa non rivederlo in quel che muore
Di tè per nostro mal, mio gran desio.

Come dal fuoco il caldo, esser diviso
Non può 'l bel dall' eterno: e la mia stima
Esalta chi ne scende, e chi'l somiglia.
Veggendo ne' tuo' occhi il Paradiso,
Per ritornar là dove io t'amai prima,
Ricorro ardendo sotto le tue ciglia.

VII.

Non sò se e' s'è l'immaginata luce
Del suo primo fattor che l' alma sente,
O se dalla memoria, o dalla mente
Alcuna altra beltà nel cuor traluce,
O se nell' alma ancor risplende, e luce
Del suo primiero stato il raggio ardente,
Di se lasciando un non sò che cocente,
Ch'è forse quel ch' à pianger mi conduce.
Quel ch'io sento e ch'io veggio, e chi mi guidi
Meco non è, nè so ben veder dove
Trovar mel possa, e par ch' altri mel mostri.
Questo donna m' avvien poi ch'io vi vidi,
Ch'un dolce amaro, un sì e nò mi muove:
Certo saranno stati gli occhi vostri.

VIII.

S'egli è che d'huom mortal giusto desio
Porti dal mondo a Dio

Principio eterno alcuna cosa bella,
Tale esser credo il mio, però che quella
Donna, per cui ogn' altra cosa obblio,
Opra ammiro gentil del suo fattore,
Né d' altro amendo, elle sel vede, ho cura.
Ned é gran meraviglia;
Perch' effetto non é del valor mio
Se l' alma per natura,
Che per gli occhi invaghita scende fuore,
S'appoggia a gli occhi, a cui si rassomiglia,
E per quelli ascendendo al primo amore,
Come a suo fin, loro ammirando onora:
Ch' amar dee l'opra chi'l suo fabro adora.

IX.

Non é colpa mai sempre empie, e mortale
Per immensa bellezza un grande amore,
Se poi si lascia rammollito il cuore
Sì che'l penétri un bel divino strale.
Amore sveglia, e muove, e impenna l' ale
Per alto volo: et é spesso il suo ardore
Il primo grado ond' al suo creatore,
Non ben contenta quì, l'anima sale.
L'amor che di te parla in alto aspira,
Ned é vano, e caduco: e mal conviensi
Arder per altro, a cuor saggio, e gentile.

L'un tira al cielo, e l'altro a terra tira,
Nell alma l'un, l'altro abita ne i sensi,
E l'arco vólge a segno, e basso, e vile.

X.

Ben può talor col mio ardente desio
Salir la speme, e non esser fallace;
Che s' ogni nostro affetto al Ciel dispiace,
Fatto a che fine avrebbe 'l mondo Iddio?
Qual più giusta cagion dell' amarti io,
Che render gloria a quell' eterna pace,
Onde pende il divin che di te piace,
E ch'ogni cor gentil fa casto, e pio?
Fallace speme ha sol l'amor che muore
Con la beltá, che scema a ciascun' ora;
Perch'è suggetto al variar d'un viso;
Certa è ben quella in un pudico cuore,
Che per cangiar di scorza non si sfiora,
Nè langue, e qui caparra il paradiso.

XI.

Passa per gli occhi al cuore in un momento
Di beltade ogni obbietto, e leggiadria
Per sì piana, et aperta, e larga via,
Che'n van forza il contrasta, e ardimento.

Ond' io dubbio fra me temo, e pavento
L'error ch' ogn' alma dal suo fin desvia,
Nè so qual vista trà i mortali sia
Che non si fermi al breve uman contento.
Pochi s' alzano al Cielo: a chiunque vive
D'amor nel fuoco, e bee del suo veleno,
(Poi che fatale è amore al viver dato.)
Se grazia nol trasporta all' alte, e dive
Bellezze, e i desir là volti non sieno,
O che miseria è l'amoroso stato.

XII.

All' alto tuo lucente diadema
Per la strada erta, e lunga
Non è donna chi giunga
S'umiltà non vi apponi, e cortesia.
Tuo salir cresce, e'l mio valore scema,
E la lena mi manca a mezza via.
Che tua beltà pur sia
Superna per ch'al cor diletto renda,
Ch'è d'ogni rara altezza avido, e vago,
Bramo; ma se dell' alma leggiadria
Debbo gioir, convien ch'ella discenda
Lá dove aggiungo, e dove sol m' appago.
Nè sdegno incontro a me donna ti prenda,
S'alzar non semmi a sì subblime stato:
E perdona a te stessa il mio peccato.

XIII.

Chi è quel che per forza a te mi mena
Legato, e stretto, e son libero, e sciolto?
Se tu incateni altrui senza catena,
E d'invisibil laccio il cor m' hai' nuolto,
Chi mi difender à dal tuo bel volto,
Chi dal vivo splendore
Degli occhi, onde saetta armato amore?

XIV.

Come può esser ch'io non sia più mio?
Chi m'ha tolto a me stesso,
Ch'a me fosse più presso,
O in me potesse più che non poss'io?
Come mi passa il cuore
Chi non par che mi tocchi?
Che cosa é questo amore,
Che sì'l desire invesca
Ch' all' alma entra per gli occhi,
E par che lá sì smisurato cresca,
Che in mille guise poi di fuor trabocchi?

XV.

Se quel che molto piace,
Spesso veduto, amarlo alcun costringe,

Se quel che pria dispiace,
In cor, che mal' accorto non s'avvede,
Frequente usanza bello ne dipinge,
Nota è virtù dell' amorosa face.
Mè (voi'l sapete, amor con voi sel vede
Senza che chiaro io'l mostri)
Occasione, od uso non han preso,
Sì raro gli occhi miei luce han da i vostri
Circoscritti ove appena il desir vola.
Un guardo sol mi ha acceso,
Nè più vi vidi ch' una volta sola.

XVI.

Dimmi di grazia amor se gli occhi miei
Veggono 'l ver della beltá ch'io miro,
O s'io l' ho dentro il cor, ch'ovunque io giro
Veggio più bello il volto di costei.
Tu 'l dei saper, poichè tu vien con lei
A tormi ogni mia pace ond'io m'adiro.
Benche nè meno un sol breve sospiro,
Né meno ardente foco chiederei.
La beltá che tu vedi è ben da quella,
Ma cresce poi ch'a miglior loco sale
Se per gli occhi mortali all' alma corre.
Quivi si fa divina, onesta, e bella,
Come a se simil vuol cosa immortale:
Questa, e non quella a gli occhi tuoi precorre.

XVII.

In tè mè veggio, e di lontan mi chiamo
Per appressarmi al cielo onde derivo,
E per le spezie a te mi' esca arrivo,
Come pesce per fil tirato all' amo.
E perche, come nato, viver bramo,
Se diviso il mio cuore è scarso pegno
Di vita, a te n'ho date ambe le parti,
Ond'io resto, e tu'l sai niente, o poco.
E s'un' alma infra due tende al più degno,
Vago ognor più del mio beato fuoco,
M'è forza s'io vo' viver sempre amarti.

XVIII.

Per fido esempio alla mia vocazione
Nascendo mi fu data la bellezza,
Che di due arti m'è lucerna, e specchio,
E s'altro huom crede è falsa opinione.
Questa sol l'occhio porta a quella altezza,
Per cui scolpire, e pinger m' apparecchio.
Sono i giudizi temerari, e sciocchi,
Ch'al senso tiran la belta che muove,
E porta al cielo ogni intelletto sano.
Dal mortale al divin non vanno gli occhi
Che sono infermi, e non ascendon dove
Ascender senza gràzia è pensier vano.

XIX.

Gli occhi miei vaghi delle cose belle,
E l' alma insieme della sua salute
Non hanno altra virtute
Ch' ascenda al ciel che rimirar in elle.
Dalle più alte stelle
Discende uno splendore,
Che'l desir tira a quelle;
E quel si chiama amore.
Ned altro ha gentil core,
Che lo innamori, et arda, e che'l consigli
Ch'un volto che ne gli occhi lor simigli.

XX.

Ogni cosa ch'io veggio mi consiglia,
E prega, e sforza ch'io vi segua, et ami,
Che quel che non è voi non è'l mio bene.
Amor che sprezza ogn' altra maraviglia,
Per mia salute vuol ch'io cerchi, e brami
Voi Sole sola. E così l'alma tiene
D'ogni altra spene, e d'ogni desir priva.
E vuol ch'io arda e viva
Non pur di voi, ma di chi voi simiglia
Degli occhi, e delle ciglia in qualche parte.
E chi da voi si parte,
Occhi mia vita, non hà luce poi:
Che'l ciel non è dove non sete voi.

XXI.

Sì come per levar donna si pone
In salda pietra dura
Una viva figura,
Che là più cresce v' più la pietra sceme,
Tal, s'opre in me son buone,
Nell' anima, ch'oppressa il suo fin teme,
Cela il soperchio della propria carne
Con l'inculta sua vile, e dura scorza.
Ma tu dalle mie estreme
Parti quel puoi levarne,
Che lega in me ragion virtute, e forza.

XXII.

Come avrò mai virtute,
Tolto da voi, di sostenermi in vita,
S'io non posso al partir chiedervi aita?
Quei pianti, quei singulti, e quei sospiri,
Ch'a voi 'l mio cor dolente accompagnaro,
Madonna duramente dimostraro
La mia propinqua morte, e i miei martíri.
Ma se fia ver che per assenza mai
Mia fedel servitù vi sia in obblio,
Per rimembranza de' mie' lunghi guai,
Vi lascio in pegno il cuor che non è mio.

XXIII.

Veggio co' bei vostri occhi un dolce lume
Che co' miei ciechi già veder non posso,
Porto co' vostri passi un pondo addosso,
Che de' miei stanchi non fu mai costume.
Volo con le vostr' ali senza piume,
Col vostro ingegno al ciel sempre son mosso,
Dal vostro arbitrio son pallido, e rosso,
Freddo al sol, caldo alle più fredde brume.
Nel voler vostro stà la voglia mia,
I miei pensier nel cuor vostro si fanno,
Nel vostro spirto son le mie parole.
Come l' una per se sembra ch'io sia,
Che gli occhi nostri in ciel veder non sanno,
Se non quel tanto che n' accende il Sole.

XXIV.

Mentre ch' alla beltà ch'io vidi in prima
L'alma avvicino che per gli occhi vede,
L'immagin dentro cresce, e quella cede,
Che in se diffida, e sua virtù non stima.
Amor, ch'adopra ogni sui ingegno, e lima,
Per ch'io pur viva ancora, a me sen riede,
E studia l'alma di riporre in sede,
Che sol la forza sua regge, e subblima.

Io conosco i miei danni, e'l vero intendo,
Che mentre a mia difesa s'arma amore,
M'ancide ei siesso, e più, se più m'arrendo.
In mezzo di due morti ho stretto il cuore,
Da quella io fuggo, e questa non comprendo,
E nello scampo suo l'alma si muore.

XXV.

Non so figura alcuna immaginarmi,
O di nud' ombra, o di terrestre spoglia,
Col più alto pensier, tal che mia voglia
Contro alla tua beltá di quella s'armi.
Che da te sceuro tanto cader parmi
Che'l cor d'ogni valor si priva, e spoglia;
Sì che pensando di scemar mia doglia
L'accresco, ond' ella morte vienè a darmi.
Però non val che più sproni mia fuga,
Mentre mi segue la beltà nomica,
Che'l men dal più veloce non si scosta.
Amor con le sue man gli occhi mi asciuga,
Promettendomi dolce ogni fatica;
Che cosa vil non è, che tantò costa.

XXVI.

Un Nume in una donna, anzi uno Dio
Per la sna lingua parla:
Ond'io per ascoltarla

Sì mi trasformo ch'io non son più mio.
Or veggio ben, poich'io
A me da lei fui tolto,
Quanto a mio danno a me stesso fui caro;
E così imparo aver di me pietate.
D'uno in altro desio
Sì m' innalza il bel volto,
Ch'io veggio morte in ogni altra beltate.
O donna che passate
Per acqua, e fuoco l'alme a i lieti giorni,
Deh fate ch'a me stesto io più non torni.

XXVII.

Ben posson gli occhi miei presso, e lontano
Veder come risplende il tuo bel volto,
Ma mentre i passi á te seguir rivolto,
Spesso le tue bell'orme io cerco in vano.
L'anima, l'intelletto intero, e sano
Per gli occhi ascende più libero, e sciolto
All' alta tua beltà, ma l' ardor molto
Non dà tal privilegio al corpo umano
Grave, e mortal, si che mal segue poi
Senza ale haver d' un' angeletta il volo,
E della vista sol si gloria, e loda.
Deh, se tu puoi nel ciel quanto tra noi,
Fà di mie membra tutte un occhio solo,
Nè fia parte in me poi che non ti goda.

XXVIII.

Quanto più fuggo, et odio ognor me stesso,
Tanto a te donna con verace speme
Ricorro, e viè men teme
L'alma per me quanto a te son più presso.
A quel che'l ciel promesso
M'ha nel tuo volto aspiro,
E ne i begli occhi tuoi pieni di pace.
Ben mi si mostra spesso
Mentre in lor questi giro,
Da quel ch'io spero in lor tuo cor fallace.
Luci non mai vedute,
E da non mai veder, quant' è'l desio,
Deh quando in voi rimiro,
Come lo sguardo, ancor per mia salute
Venga, e s'incontri il vostro cuor col mio.

XXIX.

Natur a ogni valore,
Ogni bellezza in donna, et in donzella
Pose a far di se prova insino a quella
Ch'oggi in un punto m' arde, e agghiaccia il cuore.
Dunque al mio gran dolore
Non sofferse simile huomo alcun mai
Dolor, che 'l pianto, e i guai
Han da maggior cagion più grave effetto.
Così poi nel dilletto,
E nella gioia mia
Non fu più di me lieto alcun, ne fià.

XXX.

Sento d'un freddo aspetto un fuoco acceso,
Che lontan m'arde, e se medesmo agghiaccia,
Trovo una forza in due leggiadre braccia,
Che muove senza moto ogn' altro peso.
Unico spirto, e da me solo inteso,
Che non ha morte, morte altrui procaccia,
Veggio, e provo chi sciolto il cor m'allaccia,
E da chi giova sol mi sento offeso.
Com' essar donna può che d'un bel volto
Ne porti'l mio così contrari effetti,
Se mal può chi non hà gorgere altrui?
Onde al mio viver lieto, che m'hai tolto,
Fa forse come'l Sol, se mel permetti,
Ch'accende 'l mondo, e non é caldo lui.

XXXI.

Fuggite amanti amor, fuggite il fuoco,
Suo'ncendio è aspro, e la piaga è mortale.
Chi per tempo nol fugge indi non vale
Né forza, né ragion, né mutar loco.
Fuggite che'l mio esempio or non fia poco:
Per quel che mi ferì possente strale,
Leggete in me, qual sarà'l vostro male,
Qual sar à l'empio, e despietato gioco.
Fuggite, e non tardate, al primo sguardo;
Ch'io pensai d'ogni tempo aver accordo,
Or sento, e voi'l vedete com'i' ardo.

Stolto chi per desio fallace, e ingordo
D'un vaga beltade incontro al dardo
Sen va d'amor, cieco al suo bene, e sordo.

XXXII.

Quanto più par che maggior duolo io senta,
Se col viso vel mostro
Senza trovar mercé, più par ch'al vostro
Beltà s'aggiunga, e'l duol dolce diventa.
Ben fa chi mi tormenta
Se in parte vi fa bella
Della mia pena ria.
Se'l mio mal vi contenta,
Mia dolce, e fiera stella
Che farà dunque con la morte mia?
Ma s' é pur ver che sia
Vostra beltà dall' aspro mio martire
E sol manchi il morire,
Morend' io morrà vostra leggiadría.
Fate che'l duolo stia
Mai sempre vivo per men vostro danno.
Ma se più bella al maggior mio mal sete,
Non ha l'anima mia più dolce quiete:
Ch'un gran piacer sostiene un grande affanno.

XXXIII.

A che più debbo omai l'intensa voglia
Sfogar con pianti, e con parole meste,
Se'l ciel quando d'affanni un' alma veste
Tardi o per tempo mai non ne la spoglia?
A che'l cor lasso di morir m'invoglia
S' altri pur dee morir? Ma ben per queste
Luci men fian l'estreme ore moleste,
Ch'ogni altro ben val men ch'una mia doglia.
E però'l colpo volentier ne involo,
Non pur non fuggo, e son già destinato
Esempio nuovo d'infelice duolo.
Se dunque ne i tormenti io son beato,
Meraviglia non é se inerme, e solo
Ardito incontro un cor di virtù armato.

XXXIV.

Se nel volto per gli occhi il cuor si vede,
Esser donna ti può giá manifesto
Il mio profondo incendio, e vaglia or questo,
Senza altri preghi, a domandar mercede.
Ma forse tua pietà con maggior fede
Ch'io non penso risguarda il fuoco onesto,
E quel desio ch'a ben oprar m'ha desto,
Come grazia ch'abbonda a chi ben chiede.

O felice quel dì, se questo è certo,
Ferminsi in un momento il tempo, e l'ore,
E'l sel non segua più sua antica traccia.
Perch'io n'accoglia, che tanto ho sofferto,
Il desiato mio pegno d'amore
Per mai sempre fruir nelle mie braccia.

XXXV.

Porgo umilmente all' aspro giogo il collo,
Il volto lieto alla fortuna ria,
Et alla donna mia
Nemica il cor di fede, e foco pieno.
Nè dal martír mi crollo,
Anzi ognor temo non mi venga meno.
Ma se'l tuo sguardo or rigido or sereno
Cibo, e vita mi fa d'un gran martíre,
Quando donna giammai potrò morire?

XXXVI.

Non mi posso tener ne voglio amore,
Crescendo il tuo furore,
Ch'io non tel dica, e giuri,
Quanto più inaspri, e induri,
A più virtù l'alma consigli, e sproni.
E se talor perdoni
Alla mia morte, a gli angosciosi pianti,

Come colvi che muore,
Dentro mi sento il cuore
Mancar mancando i miei tormenti tanti.
Occhi lucenti, e santi
Ne i miei dolci martir per voi s'impara,
Com' esser può talor la morte cara.

XXXVII.

Perchè le tue bellezze al mondo sieno
In donna più cortese, e viè men dura,
Credo se ne ripigli la natura
Tutte quelle ch'ognor ti vengon meno.
E serbi a reformar del tuo sereno
E dium volto una gentil figura
In cielo, e sia d'amor perpetua cura
Vestirne un cor di grazia, e pietá pieno,
E prenda insieme i miei sospiri ancora,
E la lacrime sparte in uno accoglia,
E doni a chi quelle ami un altra volta.
Forse ch'ei, più di me felice, allora
Lei mover à con la mia propria doglia,
Né fia spersa la grazia ch'or m'è tolta.

XXXVIII.

Neg li anni molti, e nelle molte prove,
Cercando, il saggio al buon concetto arriva

D'una immagine viva,
Vecchio, e già presso a morte, in pietra dura.
Similmente natura,
Di tempo in tempo, e d'uno in altro volto,
S'al sommo errando di bellczza, e giunta,
Nel tuo divino è vecchia, e dee perire.
Onde la tema molto
Con la beltà congiunta
Di stranio cibo pasce il mio desire.
Nè sò pensar, ne dire
Qual nuoca, o giovi più, visto il tuo aspetto,
O'l fin dell' universo, o'l gran diletto.

XXXIX.

Il mio refugio, e l'ultimo mio scampo
(Qual più sicuro, o forte?)
E'il piangere, e'l pregare, e non m'aita.
Amore, e crudeltá m'han posto il campo,
L'un s'arma di pietà, l'altra di morte
Questa m'ancide, e quel mi tiene in vita.
Così l'anima ardita
Tenta'l partir, che sol porría giovarne.
Più volte per andarne
S'è mossa lá dov'esser sempre spera.
Ma l'immagine vera,
Della qual vivo, allor risorge al core,
Perchè da morte non sia vinto amore.

XL.

Se m'vece de' giorn gli affanni, e i pianti
Fu brami amor, m'è caro ogni tuo strale.
Che fra la morte, e il male
Non dona il tempo pure un breve spazio.
Perch'el morire a i non felici amanti
Risparmia il duolo, et è minor lo strazio.
Onde io pur ti ringrazio
Della mia morte per tramm di doglie:
Ch'ogni mal sana chi la vita toglie.

XLI.

Sarrien tal or che in pietra mi rassomigli,
Per fare un altra immagine, se stesso,
Sgrallito, e smorto, spesso
Esprimo me, che tal son per costei
E par che sempre io pigli
L'immagin mia ch'io penso di far lei.
Ben è il sasso potrei
Dir che è la esempio dir ch'a lei s'assembra.
Ma non gl'animai sapre
Ver se [illegible] le mie afflitte membra.
Ma se l'arte rimembra
Ver a una gran beltà, ben dovrebb'ella
Far le opre, per ch'io lei faccia bella.

XLII.

Questa mia donna lusinghiera ardita
Allor ch'ella m'uccide ogni mio bene
Con gli occhi mi promette, e parte tiene
Il crudel ferro dentro alla ferita.
E così morte, e vita
Contrarie insieme in un breve momento
Dentro all'anima sento.
Ma la gioia, e'l tormento
Minaccia morte egual per lunga prova:
Ch'assai più nuoce il mal, che' l ben non giova.

XLIII.

Se dal cor lieto divien bello il volto,
E dal tristo difforme,
E s'a distinguer molto
Fatti fur gli occhi miei
Della mia chiara stella
Il bel dal bel con sue diverse forme,
In danno suo costei
Sovra le belle bella
Mi fa doglioso, e il prende in gioco, e spesso
Dicemi che'l pallor mio dal cor viene.
Che s'è natura altrui pinger se stesso,
Et in ogni opra palesar l'affetto.
Mentr'io dipingo lei,

Qual la farò s'afflitto ella mi tiene?
Rasserenimi'l petto,
Et io la ritrarrò col viso asciutto,
Lei farò bella, e in me scemerò'l brutto.

XLIV.

Com'esser donna puote, e pur sel vede
La lunga esperienza, che più dura
Immagin viva in pietra alpestre, e dura
Che'l suo fattor, che morte in breve fiede?
La cagione all'effetto inferma cede,
Et è dall' arte vinta la natura.
Jo'l sò ch'amica ho sìl alma scultura,
E veggo il tempo omai rompermi fede.
Forse ad amendue noi dar lunga vita
Posso, o vuoi ne i colori, o vuoi ne i sassi,
Rassembrando di noi l affetto, el volto.
Si che mill' anni dopo la partita
Quanto tu bella fosti, et io t' amassi
Si veggia, e come a amarti io non fui stolto.

XLV.

S'un casto amor, s'una pietá superna,
S'una fortuna in fra duo amanti eguale,
Cui sia comune ognor la gioia e'l male,
Quando uno spirto sol due cor governa,

S'una anima in duo corpi fatta eterna,
Ambo levando al cielo, e con pari ale,
S'un simil fuoco, et un conforme strale,
Ch'altamente in due sen vive, e s' interna,
S'amar l'un l'altro, e nessun mai se stesso,
Sol desiando amor d'amor mercede,
E se quel che vuol l'un l'altro precorre
A scambievole imperio sottomesso,
Son segni pur di indossolubil fede,
Or potrà sdegno tanto nodo sciorre.

XLVI.

Se in donna alcuna parte è che sia bella,
Quantunque altre sian brutte,
Debb'io amarle tutte
Nutrito dal piacer ch'io trovo in quella?
La parte men gradita, che s'appella
Alla ragion, pur vuole,
Mentre l'intera gioia per lei s'attrista,
Che l'innocente error si scusi et ami.
Amor che mi favella
Della noiosa vista,
Com'irato dir suole,
Che nel suo regno non si vuol richiami.
E'l ciel pur vuol ch'io brami
Quel che non piace, perche in voglia umana
L'uso, amandosi'l bello, il brutto sana.

XLVII.

Poi che d'ogni mia speme il verde è spento,
Nè pietà del mio mal ti stringe, o move,
E godi ognor viè più del mio tormento,
In chi spero trovar mercede, o dove
Rivolgo i preghi, e in chi fia ch'io mi fide,
Se te non vincon di mia fe le prove!
Amor che le question nostre recide
Giudice invoco, e s'io mi doglio attorto,
Dia l'arco in mano a chi di me si ride.
Chi é prigion, chi è presso ad esser morto
Al tribunal del suo signor s'appella,
Benche tiranno ingiusto, o poco accorto.
O donna sovra l'altre belle bella,
Come può chi t'onora, adora, e serve
Farti schiva, fugace, altera, e fella?
O voglie rigidissime, e proterve,
O anima di giel che più s'agghiaccia
Più presso al fuoco dov'amor più ferve.
Preste ad uccider, crude, e fiere braccia,
Mani a schernir chi per voi muor sì pronte,
Occhi volti a beffar chi più s'allaccia.
Bellezze senza numer chiare, e conte,
Nobiltà vera, onor, virtù del cielo
Che fossero altrui danni, ingiurie, et onte
Non credei giá, ma provvidente zelo,
E divina mercè sol per mostrarci
Qual vita fia sciolto il corporeo velo.

Ma tu ingrata, che fede puoi donarci
Con tua beltá delle cose divine,
Vivi qui sol per morte, e strazio darci.
Chi mandata è dal ciel solo per fine
D' altrui giovare, e'l niega, ahi ben é degna
Delle sue sì, non dell' altrui rovine.
Ma'l ben che tu m'ascondi amor m'insegna,
E vuol ch'io tel rimembri, e tel dimostri,
Acciocche di perdon non resti indegna.
Movanti onestamente i vivi inchiostri,
Pregia me, pregia il mondo, a cui sè bella,
Nè schivar, ben che bassi, i merti nostri.
E'l fin di chi ha virtù giovar con ella;
E vien più ad vopo dov' ell'è più rara;
Che più luce fra l ombre accesa stella.
Tu sè pur di te stessa troppo avara,
Tal che m'uccidi, e ne resti impunita,
E l'alterezza tua sempre è più chiara.
Qual fu sorte giammai simile udita?
Cambiare amor, pietà, servizio, e fede
A strazi, a pene, a morte senza aita.
O grazie che dal ciel sì'l mondo vede
Raro piover altrui, perche a te tolte,
Non ne divien più amica donna erede?
Ma non per l aspre tue repulse molte
Ritraggo il cuor: che s'altra unqua m'alletta.
Mi son l'altrui lusinghe insulse, e stolte.

E par che nuova speme ne impromette
All' anima innocente ancor pietade,
E nuovo tempo per suo scampo aspetta.
Che s'ogni donna lievemente cade
A creder al bugiardo la menzogna,
Che con falsi argomenti persuade;
Più dei creder tu'l ver, s' al vero agogna
L'anima tua; e fia tanto potente
Che mi torrà dal cor questa vergogna.
Tu falsa, disleale, e crudelmente,
Ch' accusi me del periglioso errore,
Che suona ognora in bocca della gente,
Ricrediti oramai, tu l'empio cuore
Tuo manifesta, ch'io so che costei
Fra l'altre donne grandi è la maggiore.
Et alla madre de gli huomini rei,
Matrigna a i giusti, mostra che chi l'ama
Nuoce viè più che scriver non saprei,
E l'onor fiede, e dà morte alla fama.

XLVIII.

Beati voi che su nel ciel godete
Le lacrime che'l mondo non ristora.
Favvi amor forza ancora,
O pur per morte liberi ne sete?
La nostra eterna quiete,
Fuor d'ogni tempo, è priva

D'invidia amando, e d'angosciosi pianti.
Dunque il peggio è ch'io viva
S'amando io ne riporto affanni tanti.
S'l cielo è delli amanti
Amico, e'l mondo è lor crudele, e ingrato,
Amando à che son nato?
A viver molto? e qnesto mi spaventa;
Che'l poco è troppo à chi ben serve e stenta.

XLIX.

Giá piansi, e sospirai misero tanto
Ch'io ne credei per sempre ogni dolore
Co i sospiri esalar, versar col pianto.
Ma morte al fonte di cotal umore
Le radici, e le vene ognora impingua,
E duol rinnova all' alma, e pena al cuore.
Dunque in un punto sol parta, e distingua
Due querele amarissime per voi
Altro pianto, altra penna, e altra lingua.
Di te fratel, di te che d'ambi noi
Genitor fosti amor mi sprona, e stringe,
Ne sò qnal doglia più m' affligga, e annoi.
La memoria l'un prima mi dipinge,
L'altro vivo scolpisce in mezzo al seno
Nuova pietà, che di pallor mi tinge.
E ver ch' all' alto empireo sereno

Tornati (com' amor mi persuade)
Hò da quetar l'affanno ond'io son pieno.
Ingiusto è'l duol che dentro un petto cade
Per chi riporta a Dio la propria messe,
Sciolto dal mondo, e da sue torte sirade.
Ma qual core é crudel, che non piangesse,
Non dovendo veder di qua più mai
Chi gli diè l'esser pria, nutrillo, e resse.
Nostri intesi dolori, e nostri guai
Son come più, o men ciascun gli sente,
E quanto io debil sia, signor tu'l sai.
E se pur l'alma alla ragion consente,
Sì duro è'l fren, per cui l'affanno ascondo,
Che'n farle forza più mi fo dolente.
E se'l pensier, nel quale io mi profondo
Non mi mostrasse al fin ch'oggi tu ridi
Del morir che temestí in questo mondo,
Conforto non havrei, ma i duri stridi
Temprati son d'una credenza ferma,
Ch'huom ben vissuto a morte in ciel s'annidi.
Nostro intelletto dalla carne inferma
E tanto oppresso, che'l morir più spiace
Quanto più'l falso persuaso afferma.
Novanta volte l'annua sua face
Ha'l sol nell' ocean bagnata, e molle
Pria che sii giunto alla divina pace.

Or ch'a nostra miseria il ciel ti tolle
Increscati di me, che morto vivo,
Se'l ciel per te quaggiù nascer mi volle.
Tu se del morir morto, e fatto divo,
Nè temi or più cangiar vita, ne voglia,
Che quasi senza invidio non lo scrivo.
Fortuna, e tempo dentro a vostra soglia
Non tenta trapassar, per cui s' adduce
In fra dubbia letizia certa doglia.
Nube non é ch'oscuri vostra luce,
L'ore distine a voi non fanno forza,
Caso, o necessità non vi conduce.
Vostra splendor per notte non s' ammorza,
Nè cresce mai per giorno, benche chiaro,
E quando'l sol più suo calor rinforza.
Nel tuo morire il mio morire imparo
Padre felice, e nel pensier ti veggio
Dove'l mondo passar ne fa di raro.
Non é, com' alcun crede morte il peggio
A chi l'ultimo dì trascende al primo,
Per grazia eterna, appresso al divin seggio.
Dove, la Dio mercé, ti credo, e stimo,
E spero di veder, se'l freddo cuore
Mia ragion tragge dal terrestre limo.
E se tra'l padre, e'l figlio ottimo amore
Cresce nel ciel, crescendo ogni virtute,

Rendendo gloria al mio divin fattore,
Goderò con la mia la tua salute.

L.

Dal primo pianto all'ultimo sospiro,
Al qual son già vicino,
Chi contrasse giammai si fier destino,
Com'io, da si benigna, e chiara stella?
Non dico iniqua, e fella
Che'l meglio fora in vista, et in aspetto
Empia haverla, e l' effetto
Provar fel ce. Che se più la miro,
Vié più pietá con dispietato cuore
Promette al mio martíro.
Ma per si bello, e si alto splendore
Vincami pur amore:
E mi fia gloria nel gradito lume,
Per farmi eterno, incenerir le piume.

LI.

Quella pietosa aita,
Che teco adduci con gli sguardi insieme,
Per le mie parti estreme
Sparge dal cuor gli spirti della vita:
Sì che l'alma impedita
Nel suo natural corso,

Pel subito gioir da me diparti.
Poi l'aspra tua partita,
Per mio tristo soccorso,
M'è morte, accolti al cuor gli spirti sparti.
S' à me veggio tornarti,
Dal cuor di nuovo dipartir gli sento.
Onde in mio gran tormento,
E l'aita, e l'offesa m'è mortale:
Nè sò qual sia peggior l'aita, o'l male.

LII.

Non men pietosa grazia che gran doglia
Affligge alcun che colpa a morte mena,
Privo di speme, gelato ogni vena,
Se vien subito scampo che'l discioglia.
Simil, se tua mercè più che mai soglia,
Nella miseria mia d' affanni piena,
Con estrema pietà mi rasserena,
Par che la vita più che'l mal mi toglia.
Ch'ogni novella onde trabocchi'l dolce
Ch'al duol contrasti, è morte in un momento:
Che troppo allarga, e troppo stringe il cuore.
La tua pietá, ch'amore, e'l ciel qui folce,
Se mi vuol vivo, affreni il gran contento,
Ch'al don soverchio debil virtù muore.

LIII.

La mercè tua, e la fortuna mia
Hanno donna si vari
Gli effetti, perch' io'mpari
Infra'l dolce, e l'amar qual mezzo sia.
Mentre benigna, e pia
Dentro, e di fuor ti mòstri
Quanto se' bella al mio ardente desire,
La fortuna aspra, e ria
Nemica a i piacer nostri
Con mille oltraggi offende il mio gioire.
Se per avverso poi da tal martíre
Si piega alle mie voglie,
Tua pietà mi si toglie.
Ma fra'l riso, e fra'l pianto in tali estremi
Mezzo non veggio ch'un gran duolo scemi.

LIV.

S'Amico al freddo sasso é il fuoco interno,
E di quel tratto poi, se' l circoscrive,
E l'arde, e sface, in qualche modo ei vive,
E lega gli altri sassi, e fassi eterno.
E con quei s' alza al cielo, e state, e verno
Vince, e in più pregio che prima s' ascrive,
E i venti, e le tempeste par che schive,
E che di Giove i folgori abbia a scherno.
Così nata di me, se mi dissolve

La fiamma che m'é dentro occulto gioco,
Arso, e poi spento, aver più vita aspetto.
Che fatto fumo, e risoluto in polve,
Eterno diverro'ndurito al fuoco
Che due begli occhi acceser nel mio petto.

LV.

Se l'alma è ver che dal suo corpo sciolta
In alcun' altro torni
A i nostri brevi giorni,
Per vivere, e morire un'altra volta,
La donna che m'ha tolta
La vita, ed ha sepolti i desir miei,
Fia poi, com'or, nel suo tornar sì cruda?
Se mia ragion s' ascolta,
Attender la dovrei
Di grazia piena, e di durezza ignuda.
Credo, s' avvien che chiuda
Gli occhi suoi belli, havrà come rinnova
Pietà del mio morir, se morte prova.

LVI.

L'alma che sparge, e versa
L'acque di fuori interne,
Il fa sol perch'eterne

Sian quelle vive fiamme in ch'è conversa.
Ogni altra aita ogni virtù dispersa,
Et ogni mio valore
Saria, se'l pianger sempre
Non lasciasse al mio ardore
Il core in preda, ancor che vecchio, e tardo.
Mia dura sorte, e mia fortuna avversa
E' di si stranie tempre,
Che vita accresco lá dove più ardo.
Tal che'l tuo acceso sguardo,
Di fuor piangendo, dentro circoscrivo:
E di quel ch'altri muor sol godo, e vivo.

LVII.

Rendete agli occhi miei, ò fonte, ò fiume
L'onde della non vostra salda vena,
Che più v'innalza, e cresce, e con più lena
Che non è'l vostro natural costume.
E tu folt'aria, che'l celeste lume
Porgi a i tristi occhi, de i sospir miei piena,
Rendi questi al cor lasso, e rasserena
Tua scura faccia, e'l puro tuo s' allume.
Renda la terra l'orme alle mie piante,
L'erba rigermogliando, che l'é tolta,
Il suono Ecco infelice a' miei lamenti.

Gli sguardi agli occhi miei tue luci sante,
Ch'io possa altra bellezza un' altra volta
Amar, se sdegni i miei desiri ardenti.

LVIII.

Sotto due belle ciglia,
Nella stagion che sprezza ogni suo strale,
Sue forze amor ripiglia.
Gli occhi miei vaghi d'ogni maraviglia
Di lor fan prova, e contrastar non vale.
E in tanto pur m'assale
Appresso al dolce un pensiero aspro, e forte
Di vergogna, e di morte.
Nè perde amor per maggior pene, e dánni;
Ch'un dì non vince l'uso di molti anni.

LIX.

Spirto ben nato, in cui si specchia, e vede
Nell' alte tue sembianze oneste, e care
Quanto natura, e'l ciel tra noi può fare,
Sè con un' opra sua l' altr' opre eccede.
Spirto leggiadro, in cui si spera, e crede
Dentro, come di fuor nel viso appare,
Amor, pietà, mercè, cose si rare,
Che mai furo in beltá con tanta fede.
L'amor mi prende, e la beltá mi lega,
La pietà, la mercè dell' alma vista

Ferma speranza al cor par che ne doni.
Qual legge, o qual decreto invido niega,
Mondo infedel, vita fallace, e trista,
Che morte a sì bell' opra non perdoni?

LX.

Perche pur d' ora in ora mi lusinga
La memoria de gli occhi, e la speranza,
Per cui non sol son vivo, ma beato,
La forza, e la ragion par che ne stringa,
Amor, natura, e la mia antica usanza
Mirarti tutto'l tempo che m'è dato.
E s'io cangiassi stato
Ove non fosser quelli,
Se vita ho in questo, in quell' altro morrei.
Occhi sereni, e belli,
Chi'n voi non vive non è nato ancora:
E chiunque nasce poi
Forza è che nato subito si mora,
Lumi celesti, s' ei non mira voi.

LXI.

Non è senza periglio
Il tuo volto divino
Dell' alma a chi è vicino,
Com'io, é morte, che la sento ognora.

Ond'io m'armo, e consiglio
Per far da quel difesa anzi ch'io mora.
Ma tua mercede, ancora
Che'l mio fin sia dappresso,
Non mi rende a me stesso:
Ne alcuna tema dal tuo amor mi scioglie,
Dolce fontana di mie amare doglie.

LXII.

Se'l timor della morte
Chi'l fugge, e scaccia sempre
Lasciar colà potesse ond'ei si move
Amor crudele, e forte
Con più tenaci tempre
D'un cor gentil fario spietate prove.
Ma perche l'alma altrove
Per morte, e grazia al fin gioire spera,
Cui non può non morir gli è'l timor caro,
Al quale ogni altro cede,
Nè contro all' alte, e nuove
Bellezze in donna altera
Hà forza altro riparo,
Che schivi suo disdegno, o sua mercede.
Io givro a chi nol crede,
Che da costei che del mio pianger ride,
Sol mi difende, e scampa chi m'uccide.

LXIII.

Mentre ch'al tempo la mia vita fugge,
Amor più mi distrugge,
Ne mi perdona un'ora,
Com'io credetti già dopo molt' anni.
L'alma che trema, e rugge,
Com'huom ch'a torto mora,
Di me si duole, e de i mie' eterni danni.
Fra'l timore, e gli inganni
D'amor, e morte, allor tal dubbio sento,
Ch'io cerco in un momento
Di loro ilmeglio, et al peggior m'appiglio,
Sì dal mal' uso è vinto il buon consiglio.

LXIV.

S'io fossi stato ne' prim'anni accorto,
Che'l bello, ond'io fui vago, almo splendore
Dovesse giunto al core
Farmisi un fuoco d'immortal tormento,
Come havrei volentier di luce spento
Lo sguardo: e della piaga che m'ha morto.
(Colpa del folle giovenil' errore)
Non porterei così lacero il petto.
Ma se nelle prim'ore
Della sua guerra alcun s'è mal difeso,
Non accusi da sera il suo disdetto.

E chi rimase preso
Nell' età verde, ch'or m'è lume, e specchio,
Indarno il piange allor ch'è stanco, e vecchio.

LXV.

Non pur la morte, ma'l timor di quella
Da crudel donna, e bella
Ch'ognor m'ancide, mi difende, e scampa.
E se talor m'avvampa
Più dell' usato il fuoco in ch'io son corso,
Non trovo altro soccorso
Che l'immagin di morte in mezzo'l cuore;
Che dove è morte non s'appressa amore.

LXVI.

Se in una pietra viva
Al par de gli anni il volto di costei
L'arte vuol che qui viva,
Che dovria dunque fare il ciel di lei,
Sendo mia quella, e questa sua fattura,
Non già mortal, ma diva
Al mondo ancor, non pure agli occhi miei?
E pur si parte, e picciol tempo dura.
Dal lato destro è zoppa sua ventura,
S'un sasso resta, e costei morte affretta.
Chi ne farà vendetta?

Natura pur, sè de i suoi figli sola
L'opra quì dura, e la sua'l tempo invola.

LXVII.

Occhi miei siete certi
Che'l tempo passa, e l'ora s'avvicina
Ch'a gli sguardi, e al pianto il passo serra.
Pietà dolce di voi vi tenga aperti,
Mentre la mia divina
Donna si degna d'abitare in terra.
Ma se'l ciel si disserra
Per le bellezze accorre uniche, e sole
Del mio terreno sole,
S'ei torna in ciel fra l'alme dive, e liete,
Allor ben sì che chiuder vi potete.

LXVIII.

Quando il principio de i sospir miei tanti
Fu per morte dal cielo al mondo tolto,
Natura che non fe mai si bel volto
Restò in vergogna, e chi lo vide in pianti.
O sorte rea de i miei desiri amanti,
O fallaci speranze, o spirto sciolto,
Dove se'or? La terra hà pur raccolto
Tue belle membra, è'l ciel tuoi pensier santi.
Mal si credette morte acerba, e rea

Fermare il suon di tue virtuti sparte,
Ch'obblio di lete estinguer non potea.
Che spogliato da lei, ben mille carte
Parlan di tè: nè per te'l cielo havea
Lassù, se non per morte, albergo, e parte.

LXIX.

Arder solea dentro il mio ghiaccio il fuoco,
Or m'è l'ardente fuoco un freddo ghiaccio,
Disciolto amor quell' insolubil laccio,
E doglia or m'è, che m'era festa, e gioco.
Quel primo amor, che mi diè posa, e loco,
Nell miserie mie n'è grave impaccio
All'alma stanca, ond'io gelido giaccio,
Com'huomo a cui di vita riman poco.
Ahi cruda morte, come dolce fora
Il colpo tuo, se spento un de gli amanti,
Così l'altro traessi all' ultim' ora?
Io non trarrei or la mia vita in pianti,
E scarco del pensier che m'addolora,
L'aer non empierei di sospir tanti.

LXX.

Qui intorno fu dove'l mio ben mi tolse,
Sua merce'l core, e dopo quella vita.
Qui co'i begli occhi mi promise aita,

E qui benignamente mi raccolse.
Quinci oltre mi legò, qui mi disciolse,
Qui risi, e piansi, e con doglia infinita
Da questo sasso vidi far partita
Colei ch'a me mi tolse, e non mi volse.
Qui ritorno sovente, e qui m'assido,
Nè per le pene men che pe' i contenti,
Dov'io fui prima preso onoro il loco.
De i passati miei casi or piango, or rido,
Come amor tu mi mostri, e mi rammenti
Dolce, o crudo il principio del mio foco.

LXXI.

Qual meraviglio è se vicino al fuoco
Mistrussi, et arsi, se poi ch'egli è spento,
M'affligge sì che consumar mi sento,
E in cener mi riduce appoco appoco.
Già vedea ardendo sì lucente il loco,
Onde pendeva il mio grave tormento,
Che solla vista mi facea contento,
E morte, e strazi m'eran festa, e gioco.
Ma poi che dell' incendio lo splendore,
Che m'ardeva, e nutriva, il ciel m'invola,
Un carbon resto acceso, e ricoperto.
E s'altre legne non mi porge amore,
Che levin fiamma, una favilla sola
Non fia di me, se in cener mi converto.

LXXII.

Dalmondo scese a i ciechi abissi, e poi
Che l'uno, e l'altro inferno vide, e a Dio,
Scorto dal gran pensier vivo salio,
E ne diè in terra vero lume a noi,
Stella d'alto valor co i raggi suoi
Gli occulti eterni a noi ciechi scoprío,
E n'hebbe il premio al fin che'l mondo rio
Dona sovente a i più pregiati eroi.
Di Dante mal fur l'opre conosciute,
El bel desio da quel popolo ingrato,
Che solo a i giusti manca di salute.
Pur fuss'io tal; ch'a simil sorte nato,
Per l'aspro esilio suo con la virtute
Darei del mondo il più felice stato.

LXXIII.

Quanto dirne si dee non si può dire,
Che troppo a gli orbi il suo splendor s'accese:
Biasmar si può più'l popol che l'offese,
Ch'al minor pregio suo lingua salire.
Questi discese a i regni del fallire
Per noi insegnare, e poscia a Dio n'ascese:
E l'alte porte il ciel non gli contese,
Cui la patria le sue negò d'aprire.
Ingrata patria, e della sua fortuna

A suo danno nutrice: e n'è bon segno
Ch'a i più perfetti abbonda di più guai.
E fra mille ragion vaglia quest' una:
Ch'egual non hebbe il suo esilio indegno,
Com'huom maggior di lui qui non fu mai.

LXXIV.

Nel corso de' mie' anni al segno sono,
Come saetta ch'al berzaglio è giunta,
Onde si dee quetar l'ardente foco.
Amor gli antichi danni a te perdono,
Cui ripensando, il cuor l'armi tue spunta:
E più per nuova prova non hai loco.
Se de i tuo' strali ancor prendesser gioco
Gli occhi miei vaghi, il cuor timido, e molle
Vorria quel che già volle:
Ond'or ti spregia, e fugge, e tu tel sai,
Per viè men forza haver stanco ne' guai.

LXXV.

Tu speri forse per nuova beltade
Tornarmi indietro al periglioso impaccio,
Ou e nè l'huom più saggio si difende?
Più certo è'l mal nella più vecchia etade:
Ond'io sarei come nel fuoco ghiaccio,
Che si distrugge, e sface, e non s'accende.
La morte in questa età sol ne difende

Dal fiero braccio, e da i pungenti strali,
Cagion di tanti mali,
E per cui spesso, già salda, et immota
L'altrui felicitá volse la ruota.

LXXVI.

L'anima mia, che con la morte parla,
Seco di se medesma si consiglia,
E di nuovi pensieri ognor s'attrista.
E'l corpo di dì in dì crede lasciarla,
Onde l'imaginato cammin piglia,
Di speranza, e timor confusa, e mista,
Ahi ahi amor come se' pronto in vista,
Temerario, audace, armato, e forte?
Che'l pensier della morte
Nel tempo suo di me vuoi cacciar fuori,
Per trar d'un tronco secco e fronde, e fiori.

LXXVII.

Che poss'io più? che debb'io? nel tuo regno
Non hai tu'l tompo miò tutto passato,
Che de' mie' anni un' ora non m'é tocca?
Qual' inganno, qual forza, o quale ingegno
Tornar mi puote a te signore ingrato,
Ch'al cuor dai morte, e pietà porti in bocca?
Ben saré l' alma semplicetta, e sciocca,

Ch'uscì de' lacci, e'l carcer trovò aperto,
Lasciando il gioir certo,
Torsi la libertà, che sì si stima,
Tornando a quel, che le dié morte in prima.

LXXVIII.

Ogni nato la terra in breve aspetta:
D'or in or manca ogni mortal bellezza.
Chi ama (io'l so) non si può ognor disciorre:
Al gran peccato é presso la vendetta.
E chi più segue quell che'l senso apprezza,
Colvi è quel ch'a più suo mal più corre.
Tiranno amore, ave mi vuoi tu porre?
Vuoi ch'obbliando i miei sofferti affanni,
L'ultimo, appo i tuo' inganni,
Giorno, che per mio scampo mi bisogna,
Sia quel del danno, e quel della vergogna?

LXXIX.

Canzon nata tra'l ghiaccio al fuoco appresso,
Se incontri amor, ch'alla mia guerra s'armi,
Cerca pace impetrarmi:
Dilli, s'egli di me desia vittoria,
Che'l vincer chi già cadde è lieve gloria.

LXXX.

Io fu già son molt' anni mille volte
Ferito, e morto, non che vinto, e stanco
Dalla tua forza, et or, ch'l crine ho bianco,
Attenderò le tue promesse stolte?
Quante fiate hai strétte, e quante sciolte
Mie voglie, lasso, e con che sprone al fianco,
M'hai fatto diventar pallido, e bianco,
Bagnando'l petto con lacrime molte?
Di te mi dolgo amor, teco amor parlo:
Scevro da tue lusinghe, a che bisogna
Prender l'arco crudel tirar a voto?
In legno incenerito o sega, o tarlo
Che vale? e correr dietro è gran vergogna
A chi troppo ha perduto e lena, e moto.

LXXXI.

Tornami al tempo allor, che lenta, e sciolta
Al cieco ardor m'era la briglia, e'l freno,
Rendimi'l volto angelico sereno,
Onde a natura ogni virtude è tolta.
E i passi sparsi con angoscia molta,
Che son sì lenti a chi è d'anni pieno,
Rendimi, e l' acqua, e'l fuoco in mezzo il seno,
Se vuoi ch'i' arda, e pianga un' altra volta.
E s'egli è pur amor che tu sol viva

De i dolci amari pianti de i mortali,
D'un vecchio esangue omai puoi goder poco.
E l'alma quasi giunta all' altra riva
Tempo è che d'altro amor provi gli strali,
E si faccia esca di più degno fuoco.

LXXXII.

Dell' aspra piaga del pungente strale
La medicina era passarmi'l cuore:
Che proprio è ciò dell' amoroso ardore,
Crescer la vita dove cresce il male.
Ma se'l suo colpo in pria non fu mortale,
Seco un messo di par venne da amore,
Dicendomi: Chi ama, qual chi muore,
Non ha da gire al ciel dal mondo altr' ale.
Io son colvi che ne' primi anni tuoi
Gli occhi tuoi infermi volsi alla beltade,
Che dalla terra al ciel vivo conduce.
O ra il confermo, e'l giuro: e non t' annoi
D' ammirarla ognor più; che vecchia etade
Viè più nel suo viaggio vopo ha di luce.

LXXXIII.

Amor, perche mai forse
Non sia la fiamma spenta
Nel freddo tempo dell' età men verde,

L'arco novellamente in me ritorse:
E mi saetta ognor ch'ei si rammenta,
Che'n gentil cor giammai colpo non perde.
Amor ne gli anni altrui stagion rinverde
Per un bel volto: or peggio è al sezzo strale
La ripercossa che'l mio primo male.

LXXXIV.

Se ne i primi anni aperto un lento, e poco
Ardor distrugge in breve un verde cuore,
Che farà chiuso poi, nell' ultim'ore,
D'un più volte arso un' insaziabil fuoco?
Se'l corso di più tempo dà men loco
Alla vita, alle forze, e al valore,
Che farà a quel che per natura muore
D'amor la fiamma, ond'io tutto m' infoco?
Già nell' incendio suo cenere farsi
L'egro, et afflitto cuore ho nel pensiero,
E'l vento il muova, e lo sollevi, e furi.
Se verde in picciol fuoco io piansi, e arsi,
Che secco omai, in un sì grande spero
Che l'alma al corpo lungo tempo duri?

LXXXV.

Amor, se tu se' Dio,
Come ti chiama'l mondo, e'l tutto puoi,

Scioglimi, deh, dell' alma i lacci tuoi.
Sconviensi al gran desio
D'alta beltà la speme
Negli ultimi anni al tempo del partire.
Ogni tua grazia ormai m' aggrava, e preme,
Che se breve è'l piacer, doppia'l martire.
Non può pace portar tardo gioire.

LXXXVI.

Ancor che'l cor più volte stato sia
D'amor acceso, e da' tropp' anni spento,
Perche i'ultimo mio d'amor tormento
Saria mortal senza la morte mia,
L'anima pur desia,
Sgombrando il sen dell' amorosa vampa,
L'ultimo quì primier nell' altra corte.
Altro refugio, o via
Mia vita non iscampa
Del suo morir che la propinqua morte,
A me pur dolce, a molti amara e forte.

LXXXVII.

Quando il guerriero amor si rappresenta
All' alma, ch'al suo ardir chiude le porte,
Fra l'uno, e l'altra s'interpon la morte,
E quel più scaccia com' più mi spaventa.

Ella, che sol per morte esser contenta
Spera, rincorre ogni amorosa sorte:
L'invitto amor con le sue oneste scorte
A sua difesa s'arma, e s'argomenta.
Morir, dice ei, si dee pur una volta:
Si mora sì, ma chiunque amando muore
L'alma nel suo partir rende più adorna.
Perche da i lacci della carne sciolta,
S'è calamita del divino ardore,
Purgata in fuoco, a Dio più lieve torna.

LXXXVIII.

Non altrimenti rapido cammina,
Ch'io mi faccia, alla morte,
Chi verso le sue porte
Per disperata infirmitade è volto.
Giá m'è morte vicina,
Nè per questo mi lassa,
Dentro i suoi lacci involto,
Amor posare un ora.
Fra due perigli, ov'io mi dormo, e veglio,
Stral di tema mortal l' alma mi passa,
E terribil m' accora,
E l' altro così m' arde stanco, e veglio.
Ma pur più temo amor che co' tuo' sguardi
M'ancida pria che morte, o non più tardi.

LXXXIX.

Già vecchio, e d'anni grave
Nell' antico desio torno, e rientro,
Si come peso al centro
Che fuor di quel riposo alcun non have.
Il ciel porge la chiave,
Amor la volge, e gira,
Et apre a i giusti il petto di costei.
Le voglie inique, e prave
A me vieta, e mi tira
Giá stanco, e vil tra i rari, e semidei.
Grazie vengon da lei
Istranie, e dolci, e di cotal valore,
Che per se vive chiunque per lei muore.

XC.

Perche sì tardi, e perche non più spesso
Questo possente mio nobile ardore
Mi solleva da terra, e porta il core
Dov'ir per sua virtù non gli è concesso?
Forse ch'ogni intervallo n'è permesso
Dall' alta provvidenza del tuo amore,
Perch'ogni raro ha più forza, e valore
Quant'è più desiato, e meno appresso?
La notte è l'intervallo, e'l dì la luce,
L'una m' agghiaccia il cuor, l'altra m' infiamma

D'amor, di fede, e di celesti rai.
Onde, se rimirar come riluce
Potessi il fonte ognor della mia fiamma,
Chi dì più bello incendio arse giammai?

XCI.

Al cor di zolfo, alla carne di stoppa,
All' ossa che di secco legno sieno,
All' alma, senza guida, e senza freno,
Al desir pronto, alla vaghezza troppa,
Alla cieca ragion debile, e zoppa,
Fra l'esche tante di che'l mondo è pieno,
Non è gran meraviglia in un baleno
Arder nel primo fuoco che s'intoppa.
Ma non potea, se non somma bellezza
Accender me, che da lei sola tolgo
A far mie opre eterne lo splendore.
Vidi umil nel tuo volto ogni mia altezza:
Rara ti scelsi, e me tolsi dal volgo:
E fia con l'opre eterno anco il mio amore.

XCII.

Se'l molto indugio spesso a più ventura
Mena il desio che l'affrettar non suole,
La mia ne gli anni assai, m' affligge, e duole;
Che'l gioir vecchio picciol tempo dura.

Contrario è al ciel, contrario alla natura
Arder nel tempo ch'agghiacciar si suole,
Com'io per donna: onde mie triste, e sole
Lacrime peso con l'età matura.
Ma lasso, ancor ch'al fin del giorno io sia
Col sol già quasi oltr' all' occaso giunto,
Fra le tenebre folte, e'l freddo rezzo,
S'amor ci'nfiamma solo a mezza via,
Forse ch'amor, così vecchio, e consunto,
Fia che ritorni gli ultimi anni al mezzo.

XCIII.

S'i' havessi pensato al primo sguardo
Di questo ardente mio terreno Sole
Mè rinnovar come fenice suole,
Arso prima sarei, com' ora i' ardo.
E qual veloce cervo, o lieve pardo,
Che cerca scampo, e fugge quel che duole,
A gli atti, alriso, all' oneste parole
Sarei corso anzi, ond' or son pigro, e tardo.
Ma perche pur dolermi, poi ch'io veggio
Ne gli occhi di quest' angel divo, e solo
Mia pace, mio riposo, e mia salute?
Ardere in gioventute era'l mio peggio,
Incauto, e cieco: e se stanco alzo'l volo,
L'ali m' impenni sua gentil virtute.

XCIV.

Col fuoco il fabro industre il ferro stende
Al concetto suo nuovo, e bel lavoro,
Nè senza fuoco alcuno artista l'oro
Al sommo grado raffinando rende.
Nè l'unica fenice sè riprende,
Se non prima arsa: onde s'ardendo moro,
Spero più chiaro sorger tra coloro,
Che morte accresce, e'l tempo non offende.
Dolce mia morte, e fortunata arsura,
Se in cener mé converso appoco appoco,
Più non vivrò fra'l numero de' morti.
O pur s'al cielo ascende per natura
Tale elemento, allor congiato in fuoco,
Fia che diritto al ciel seco mi porti.

XCV.

Se'l fuoco fosse alla bellezza eguale
De' bei vostri occhi, che da quei si parte,
Non fora in petto alcun gelata parte
Senza l'ardor che si crudel n' assale.
Ma'l ciel pietoso d'ogni nostro male
Del sovrano splendor, che'n voi comparte,
Lo intero rimirar ci toglie in parte,
Per l'incendio temprare aspro, e mortale.
Non è par, dico, il fuoco alla beltade;

Che sol di quella parte huom s'innamora,
Che vista, et ammirata, è da noi intesa.
Però, se, lasso, in questa inferma etade
Non vi par che per voi io arda, e mora,
Poco conobbi, e l'alma è poco accesa.

XCVI.

Per ritornar là donde venne fuora
L'immortal forma, al suo carcer terreno
Com'angel venne, e di pietà sì pieno,
Che sana ogni intelletto, e'l mondo onora.
Questa sol m'arde, e questa m'innamora,
Non pur di fuor, che'l tuo lume sereno
Sueglia amor non di cosa che vien meno,
Ma pon sua speme ove virtù dimora.
E se talor tua gran beltà ne muove,
E'l primo grado da salir al cielo,
Onde poi grazia a gli altri s'apparecchi.
Nè Dio se stesso manifesta altrove
Più che in alcun leggiadro mortal velo,
Dov'occhio sano in sua virtù si specchi.

XCVII.

Veggio nel volto tuo col pensier mio
Quel che narrar non puossi in questa vita,
L'anima della carne ancor vestita

Bella, e viva, e più volte ascesa a Dio.
E se'l vulgo malvagio, sciocco, e rio
Di quel che sente altrui segna, e addita,
Non m'è l'intensa voglia men gradita,
L'amor, la fede, e l'onesto desio.
A quel pietoso fonte, onde siam tutti,
S'assembra ogni beltá che quà si vede
Più ch'altra cosa dalle menti accorte.
Ned altro saggio abbiam, ned altri frutti
Del cielo in terra: e chi t'ama con fede
Si leva a Dio, e fa dolce la morte.

XCVIII.

Perche l'età ne invola
Il desir cieco, e sordo,
Con la morte m'accordo
Stanco, e vicino all' ultima parola.
Tema di morte sola,
Ch'al mio stato provvede,
Come da cosa perigliosa, e vaga,
Dal tuo bel volto donna m'allontana.
Amor, ch'al ver non cede,
Di nuovo il cor m'appaga
Di nobil speme, e non per cosa umana
Mi promette avvampar: fiamma d'amore,
E mortal giel guerreggian del mio cuore:

XCIX.

Amor la morte a forza
Del pensier par mi scacci,
E intempestivo impacci
L'alma, chè senza saria più contenta.
Caduto è'l frutto, e secca è già la scorza,
E par ch'amaro ogni mio dolce io senta.
E m'annoia, e tormenta
Nell' ultim'ore, e corte
Infinito piacere in breve spazio.
Pure amor ti ringrazio;
Che in questa età, s'io muoio per tal sorte,
M'ancide tua mercede, e non la morte.

C.

Quantunque il tempo ne costringa, e sproni
Ognor con maggior guerra
A rendere alla terra
Le membra afflitte, stanche, e peregrine,
Non ha per ancor fine
Chi nuoce all' alma, e me fa così lieto:
Nè par che mi perdoni,
Benche l'ore di morte
Mi sian tanto vicine,
E si dubbiose nel final decreto.
Che l'error consueto

Com' più m' attempo ognor si fa più forte,
O dura mia più ch'altra crudel sorte,
Tardi oramai puoi tormi tanti affanni:
Ch' un cuor, che arde, et arse già molti anni,
Torna, se ben l'ammorza la ragione,
Non più già cuor, ma cenere, e carbone.

CI.

Tanto alla speme mia di se promette
Donna pietosa, e bella,
Che in rimirando quella,
Sarei, qual fui per tempo, or vecchio, e tardi.
Ma perch'ognor si mette
Morte invidiosa, e fella
Fra i miei diletti, e i suoi pietosi sguardi,
Solo convien ch'io ardi
Quel picciol tempo che la morte obblio.
Ma perche'l pensier mio
Pur là ritorna al paventoso errore,
Dal mortal ghiaccio è spento ill dolce ardore.

CII.

Se per mordace di molt' anni lima
Discresce, e manca ognor tua stanca spoglia,
Anima inferma, or quando fia ti scioglia

Da quella il tempo, e torni ov'eri in cielo
Candida, e lieta prima?
Che 'bench'io cangi il pelo,
E già sì di mia vita il fil s'accorti,
Cangiar non posso il mio tristo antic'uso,
Che più invecchiando, più mi sferza, e preme.
Signore a te nol celo,
Ch'io porto invidia a' morti
Sbigottito, e confuso,
Sì di se meco l'alma trema, e teme.
Deh tu nell'ore estreme
Stendi ver me le tue pietose braccia,
A me mi togli, e fammi un che ti piaccia.

CIII.

Io di te falso amor molti anni sono
Nutrita ho l'alma, e se non tutto in parte
Il corpo ancor, che tua mirabil arte
Regge altri in vita ch'al cader é prono.
Or lasso alzo i pensier su l'ali, e sprono
Me stesso a più sicura, e nobil parte,
E de' mie' falli, onde ben mille carte
Son piene omai, a Dio chieggio perdono.
Altro amor mi promette eterna vita,
D'altre bellezze, e non caduche vago,
Mentre a' suoi strali il cuor tutto disarmo.

Questo mi punga, et ei mi porga aita;
Che di celeste speme al fin m'appago
Anzi che'l cener mio copra d'un marmo.

CIV.

Carico d'anni, e di peccati pieno,
E nel mal uso radicato, e forte,
Vicin mi veggio all'una, e all' altra morte,
E in parte il cuor nutrisco di veleno.
Nè proprie hò forze ch'al bisogno sieno
Per cangiar vita, amor, costume, e sorte,
Senza le tue divine, e chiare scorte,
Nel mio fallace corso, e guida, e freno.
Ma non basta Signor che tu ne invogli
Di ritornar colà l'anima mia
Dove per te di nulla fu creata.
Prima che del mortal la privi, e spogli,
Col pentimento ammezzami la via,
E fia più certa a te tornar beata.

CV.

Ora d'un ghiaccio, or d'un ardente fuoco,
E sempre de' mie' danni il cuor gravato,
L'avvenir nel passato
Specchio con trista, e dolorosa speme.
E'l ben per durar poco

L'alma non men che'l mal m'aggrava, e preme.
Alla buona, alla ria fortuna insieme
Stanco egualmente, a Dio chieggio perdono.
E veggio ben che della vita sono
Ventura, e grazia l'ore brevi, e corte:
Che l'umane miserie han fin per morte.

CVI.

Forse perche d'altrui pietà mi vegna,
Perche dell' altrui colpe io più non rida,
Seguendo mal sicura, e falsa guida,
Caduta é l'alma che fu già si degna.
Sotto qual debba ricourare insegna
Non so Signor, se la tua non m'affida.
Temo al tumulto dell' avverse strida
Perire, ove'l tuo amor non mi sostegna.
La tua carne, il tuo sangue, e quella estrema
Doglia, che ti dié morte, il mio peccato
Purghi, in ch'io nacqui, e nacque il padre mio.
Tu solo il puoi, la tua pietá suprema
Soccorra al mio dolente iniquo stato,
Sì presso a morte, e sì lontan da Dio.

CVII.

Ohime, ohime ch'io son tradito
Da' miei giorni fugaci, e pur lo specchio
Non mente, s'amor proprio non l'appanna.
Ahi, che chi folle nel desir s'affanna,
Non s'accorgendo del tempo fuggito,
Si trova, come me, in un punto vecchio.
Nè mi sò ben pentir, né m'apparecchio,
Né mi consiglio con la morte appresso.
Nemico di me stesso,
Inutilmente pianti, e sospir verso;
Che non è danno pari al tempo perso.

CVIII.

Ohime, ohime, che pur pensando
A gli anni corsi, lasso, non ritrovo
Fra tanti un giorno che sia stato mio.
Le fallaci speranze, e'l van desio,
Piangendo, amando, ardendo, e sospirando
(Ch'affetto alcun mortal non m'è più nuovo)
M'hanno tenuto, ora il conosco, e provo,
E dal vero, e dal ben sempre lontano.
Io parto ammano ammano,
Crescemi ognor più l'ombra, e'l sol vien manco,
E son presso al cadere infermo, e stanco.

CIX.

Io vò, misero, ohime, ne sò ben dove,
Aspro temo'l viaggio, e'l tempo andato
L'ora m'appressa perche gli occhi chiuda.
Or che l'età la scorza cangia, e muda,
La morte, e l'alma insieme fan gran prove,
Con dura, e incerta guerra del mio stato
E s'io non son per troppa tema errato,
(Voglialo il cielo, e il proprio amor ch'io sia)
L'eterna pena mia
Nel mal inteso, e mal usato vero
Veggio Signor, ne sò quel ch'io mi spero.

CX.

Scarco d'una importuna, e grave salma
Signore eterno, e dal mondo disciolto,
Qual fragil legno a te stanco mi volto
Dall' orribil procella in dolce calma.
Le spine, i chiodi, e l'una, e l'altra palma,
Col tuo benigno umil lacero volto
Prometton grazia di pentirsi molto,
E speme di salute alla trist' alma
Non miri con giustizia il divin lume
Mio fallo, o l'oda il tuo sacrato orecchio,
Nè in quel si volga il braccio tuo severo.

Tuo sangue lavi l'empio mio costume,
E più m'abbondi quanto io son più vecchio
Di pronta aita, e di perdono intero.

CXI.

Mentre che'l mio passato m'è presente,
Che indarno io schivo, e innanzi ognor mi viene,
O mondo falso allor conosco bene
L'errore, e'l danno dell'umana gente.
Quel cor ch'al fin consente
A tue lusinghe, à tuoi vani diletti,
Procaccia all' alma dolorosi guai.
Vedel chi ben pon mente
Come spesso prometti
Altrui la pace, e il ben che tu non hai.
Quant'io piansi giammai,
Quant'io soffersi affanni
Fu'l creder troppo a i tuo' fallaci inganni.

CXII.

Condotto da molti anni all'ultim'ore,
Tardi conosco, mondo, i tuoi contenti.
La quiete, onde sei privo, altrui presenti,
E quel riposo ch'anzi al nascer muore,
Ma non però vergogna, ne dolore
De i mal spesi anni miei si fuggitivi

Voglia, e pensier nel cuor non mi rinnova.
Che chi s'invecchia, ahime, in un dolce errore,
Mentre nel suo desio par che s'avvivi,
L'anima ancide, e nulla al corpo giova.
M'avveggio al fin con mia'nfelice prova,
Che quei per sua salute ha miglior sorte,
Ch'ebbe nascendo più presta la morte.

CXIII.

Mentre m'attrista, e duol parte m'è caro
Ciascun pensier ch'a memoria mi riede,
Del tempo andato, e che ragion mi fiede
De' dì perduti, onde non è riparo.
Caro m'è sol, perch'anzi morte imparo
Quant'ogni uman diletto ha corta fede,
Tristo m'è, ch'a trovar grazia, e mercede
Ne gli ultimi anni a molte colpe è raro.
Che ben ch'alle promesse tue s'attenda,
Sperar forse Signore è troppo ardire,
Ch'ogni soperchio indugio amor perdoni.
Ma pur nel sangue tuo par si comprenda,
S'egual per noi non ebbe il tuo martire,
Ch'oltre a misura sian tuoi cari doni.

CXIV.

Deh fammiti vedere in ogni loco,
Che se infiammar dal tuo lume mi sento,

Ogni altro ardor ne l'alma mia fia spento,
Per sempre accesa viver nel tuo foco.
Io te chiamo Signor, te solo invoco
Contro l'inutil mio cieco tormento:
Tu mi rinnuova in sen col pentimento
Le voglie, e'l senno, e'l valor ch'è si poco.
Tu desti al tempo l'anima, ch'è diva,
E in questa spoglia si fragile, e stanca
La incarcerasti, e desti al suo destino.
Tu la nutri, e sostieni, e tu l'avviva:
Ogni ben senza te signor le manca:
La sua salute è sol poter divino.

CXV.

Vivo al peccato, et a me morto vivo:
Mia vita non é mia, ma del peccato;
Dalla cui fosca nebbia traviato,
Cieco cammino, e son di ragion privo.
Serva mia libertà, per cui fiorivo,
A me s'è fatta: O infelice stato.
A che miseria, a quanto duol son nato,
Signor, se in tua pietade io non rivivo.
S'io mi rivolgo indietro, e veggio'l corso
Di tutti gli anni miei pieno di errore,
Non accuso altri che'l mio ardire insano.

Perche lentando a' miei desiri il morso,
Il bel sentier che n'adduce al tuo amore
Lasciai. Porgine or tu tua santa mano.

CXVI.

Ben sarian dolci le preghiere mie,
Se virtù mi prestassi da pregarte:
Nel mio terreno infertil non é parte
Da produr frutto di virtù natie.
Tu il seme se' dell' opre giuste, e pie,
Che là germoglian dove ne fai parte:
Nessun proprio valor può seguitarte,
Se non gli mostri le tue belle vie.
Tu nella mente mia pensieri infondi,
Che producano in me sì vivi effetti,
Signor, ch'io segua i tuoi vestigi santi.
E dalla lingua mia chiari, e facondi
Sciogli della tua gloria ardenti detti,
Perche sempre io ti lodi, esalti, e canti.

CXVII.

Non è più bassa, o vil coso terrena
Di quel che senza te, misero, io sono;
Onde nel lungo error chiede perdono
La debile mia'nferma, e stanca lena.

Porgimi alto Signor quella catena,
Che seco annoda ogni celeste dono,
La fede dico, a cui mi volgo, e sprono,
Fuggendo il senso ch'a perir mi mena.
Tanto mi fia maggior quanto è più raro
De i doni il dono: e maggior fia se senza,
Pace, e contento il mondo in se non have.
Per questa il fonte sol del pianto amaro
Mi può nascer nel cuor di penitenza:
Ne'l ciel si schiude a noi con altra chiave.

CXVIII.

Sè spesso avvien che'l gran desir prometta
Molti lieti anni a i miei passati ancora,
Manco m'é cara, e più m'é grave ognora
Tanto la vita quanto più diletta.
E che più vita, e che gioir s'aspetta?
Gioia terrena con lunga dimora,
Contento uman, che sì l'alme innamora,
Tanto più nuoce quanto più n'alletta.
Però quando tua grazia in me rinnova
Fede, et amor con quello ardente zelo,
Che vince'l mondo, e l'alma fa sicura,
Quando più scarco tua pietà mi trova,
Stendi tua santa mano a trarmi al cielo,
Che in uman cuor giusto voler non dura.

CXIX.

Giunto è giá 'l corso della vita mia
Con tempestoso mar per fragil barca
Al comun porto, ov'à render si varca
Giusta ragion d'ogn'opra trista, e pia.

Onde l'affettuosa fantasìa,
Che l'arte si fece idolo, e monarca
Conosco ben quant'era d'error carca;
Ch'errore è ciò che l'huom quaggiù desìa.

I pensier miei già de' mie' danni lieti,
Che fian'or s'a due morti m'avvicino,
L'una m'é certa, e l'altra mi minaccia?

Ne pinger ne scolpir fia più che queti
L'anima volta a quell' amor divino,
Ch'aperse a prender noi in croce le braccia.

ALLA SIG. VITTORIA COLONNA.

MARCHESARA DI PESCARA.

CXX.

Poscia ch'appreso ha l'arte intera, e diva
D'alcun la forma, e gli atti, indi di quello
D'umìl materia in semplice modello
Fa il primo parto, e'l suo concetto avviva.

Ma nel secondo in dura pietra viva
S'adempion le promesse del martello,
Ond' ei rinasce, e fatto illustre, e bello,
Segno non è che sua gloria prescriva.

Simil di me model nacqu'io da prima,
Di me model per opra più perfetta
Da voi rinascer poi, donna alta, e degna.

Se il men riempie, e'l mio soperchio lima
Vostra pietà, qual penitenza aspetta
Mio cieco, e van pensier se la disdegna?

ALLA MEDESIMA.

CXXI.

Perch'è troppo molesta,
Ancor che dolce sia,
Grazia talor, ch'un' alma legar suole;
Mia libertá di questa
Vostr' alta cortesìa
Più che d'un furto si lamenta, e duole.
E com' occhio nel Sole
Disgrega sua virtù, che pur dovrebbe
Trar maggior luce quindi ove gioisce;
In tal guisa il desio, benche il consolé

Quella mercè che in me da voi sì crebbe,
Si perde, e si smarrisce.
Poca virtù per molta s' abbandona.
Nuoce chi troppo dona:
Ch'amor gli amici vuole, onde son rari,
E di fortuna, e di virtute pari.

ALLA MEDESIMA.

CXXII.

Per esser manco alta signora indegno
Del don di vostra immensa cortesìa,
Con alcun merto hebbe desire in pria
Precorrer lei mio troppo umile ingegno.

Ma scorto poi ch'ascender à quel segno
Proprio valor non è ch'apra la via,
Vien men la temeraria voglia mia,
E dal fallir più saggio al fin divegno.

E veggio ben com' erra, s'alcun crede
La grazia che da voi divina piove
Pareggiar l'opra mia caduca, e frale.

L'iugegno, e l'arte, e l'ardimento cede:
Che non può con mill' opre, e chiare, e nuove
Pagar celeste don virtù mortale.

ALLA MEDESIMA.

CXXIII.

Ora su'l destro, or su'l sinistro piede
Variando cerco della mia salute,
Fra'l vizio, e la virtute
Il cuor confuso mi travaglia, e stanca,
Come chi'l ciel non vede
Che per ogni sentier si perde, e manca.
Porgo la carta bianca
A i vostri sacri inchiostri,
Ove per voi nel mio dubbiar si scriva,
Come quest' alma d'ogni luce priva
Possa non traviar dietro il desio
Ne gli ultimi suoi passì ond' ella cade:
Per voi si scriva, voi che'l viver mio
Volgeste al ciel per le più belle strade.

IN MORTE DELLA MEDESIMA.

CXXIV.

Per non sì havere a ripigliar da tanti
Per morte la beltà pura e sincera,
A nobil donna altera
Prestata fu sott' un candido velo:

Che se in tutti l'havesse sparsa quanti
Sono i mortali, a se ritrarla il cielo,
E rimborsarsi poi non ben potea.
Da questa, se dir lice, mortal Dea,
Se l' ha ripresa, e tolta a gli occhi nostri.
Giá non ponno in obLiio,
Benche'l mortal sia morto,
Porsi i dolci leggiadri, e sacri inchiostri.
Ma spietata pietà parche ci mostri,
Che se'l cielo a ciascun porgeva in sorte
Partitamente la beltá di lei,
Per riaverla poi da noi per morte,
Saremmo or tutti noi di morte rei.

A M. GANDOLFO PORRINO.

RISPOSTA.

CXXV.

La nuova alta beltà che in ciel terrei
Unica, non che al mondo iniquo, e fello,
Al mondo cieco, ch'a virtù ribello,
Non vede lo splendor ch'esce di lei,

Per voi sol nacque: e finger non saprei
Con ferro in pietra, in carte con pennello
Divin sembiante: e voi fermare in quello
Vostro diletto sol pensar dovrei.

E se in guisa che'l Sole ogn'altra stella
Vince, ella avanza l'intelletto nostro,
Il mio si basso stil non vi aggiugnea.

Dunque acquetar nella beltà novella,
Da Dio formata, l'alto desir vostro
Ei solo, et huom non mai, fare il potea.

A LUIGI DEL RICCIO.

RISPOSTA.

CXXVI.

Appena in terra i begli occhi vidd'io,
Che fur due soli in questa oscura vita,
Che chiusi il dì dell'ultima partita,
Gli aperse il cielo a contemplare Iddio,

Conosco, e duolmi, e non fu l'error mio
Per mirar tardi la beltà infinita,
Ma d'importuna morte, ond'è sparita
A voi non già, ma al mondo cieco, e rio.

Però Luigi a far l'unica forma
Dell'angelico volto in pietra víva
Eterna, or ch'è già terra qui fra noi.

Se l'un nell'altro amante si trasforma,
E non veduta, l'arte non l'arriva,
Convien che per far lei ritragga voi.

AL MEDESIMO.

CXXVII.

Non sempre al mondo è si pregiato, e caro
Quel che molti contenta,
Che non sia alcnn che senta
Quel ch'è lor dolce a se crudo, et amaro.
Ma spesso al folle volgo, al volgo ignaro
Convien ch'altri consenta,
E mesto rida dov'ei ride, e gode,
E pianga allor che più felice siede.
Io del mio duol quest'uno effetto ho caro,
Ch'alcun di fuor non vede
Chi l'alma attrista, e i suoi desir non ode.
Né temo invidia, o pregio onore, o lode
Del mondo cieco, che rompendo fede,
Più giova a chi più scarso esser ne suole,
E vò per vìe men calpestate, e sole.

EPITAFFI.

IN GRAZIA DEL MEDESIMO.

CXXVIII.

Se fusser per ch'io viva un altra volta
Gli altrui pianti a quest' ossa e carne, e sangue,
Saria spietato chi s'affanna, e langue,
Per rilegarvi l'alma in cielo accolta.

Qui convien ch'alcun tempo io posi, e dorma
Fin che più bel ripigli il mio bel velo,
Bel sì che più beltà non havea'l cielo,
Ch'alla natura fosse esempio, e norma.

Alla terra la terra, e l'alma al cielo
N'ha reso morte: e chi morta ancor m'ama
Ha dato in cura mia bellezza, e fama,
Ch'eternar faccia in pietra il mio bel velo.

Priva di vita mi ritolse a morte
più nobil vita, e sciolte in terra l'ale,
In paradiso albergo ebbi immortale,
Un de' beati dell' eterna corte.

Io fui mortale, et or son fatta diva:
Poco hebbi il mondo, e per sempre il ciel godo.
Di sì bel cambio, e di morte mi lodo
Da cui fui spenta ad eternarmi viva.

A MONSIGNOR LODOVICO BECCADELLI ARCIVESCOVO DI RAUGIA.

RISPOSTA.

CXXIX.

Per la via de gli affanni, e delle pene
Spero, la Dio mercé, trovare il cielo:
Ma innanzi al dispogliar del mortal velo
D'esser con voi vien meno ogni mia spene.

Pur s'aspra terra, e mar difficil tiene
L'un dall' altro lontan, lo spirto, e'l zelo
Non havrà intoppi nè per neve, o gielo,
Nè l'ali del pensier lacci, o catene.

Perche pensando son sempre con voi,
E piango intanto del mio amato Urbino,
Che vivo, or forse saria costà meco.

Cotal fu'l desir mio; sua morte poi
Mi chiama, e tira per altro cammino,
Et ei m'aspetta in cielo a albergar seco.

A UN PITTORE.

CXXX.

Se con lo stile, e co i colori havete
Alla natura pareggiata l'arte,
Anzi a quella scemato il pregio in parte,
Che'l bel di lei più bello a noi rendete,
Poi che con dotta man posto vi sete
A più degno lavoro, a vergar carte,
Se'n lei di pregio ancor rimanea parte,
Nel dar vita ad altrui tutta togliete.
Che se secolo alcun giammai contese
Seco in bell' opre, almen le cede poi,
Che convien ch'al prescritto fine arrive.

Or le memorie altrui, già spente, accese
Tornando, fate ch'or sian quelle, e voi,
Malgrado d'essa, eternalmente vive.

RISPOSTA ALL'EPIGRAMMA DI GIOVANNI STROZZI SOPRA LA STATUA DELLA NOTTE, CHE E QUESTO.

CXXXI.

' La notte, che tu vedi in si dolci atti
' Dormir, fu da un Angelo scolpita
' In questo sasso, e perche dorme, ha vita:
' Destala se nol credi, e parleratti.'

Grato m'èl sonno, e più l'esser di sasso,
Mentre che'l danno, e la vergogna dura:
Non veder, non sentir m'è gran ventura,
Però non mi destar, deh parla basso.

COMPONIMENTI MENO GRAVI, O GIOCOSI.

CXXXII.

Sovra quel biondo crin, di fior contesta,
Come sembra gioir l'avrea ghirlanda?
Ma quel che più superbo innanzi manda,
Gode esser primo di baciar la testa.

Stassi tutto il dì lieta quella vesta,
Che'l petto serra, e poi vien che si spanda,

E'l bell'oro non men, che d'ogni banda
Le guance, e'l collo di toccar non resta.

Ma viè più lieto il nastro par che goda,
Che con si dolci, e si soavi tempre
Tocca, e preme il bel petto ch'egli allaccia.

E la schietta cintura, onde s'annoda
Il fianco, dice, qui vo' stringer sempre.
Or che farebber dunque l'altrui braccia?

CXXXIII.

Costei pur si delibra
Indomita, e selvaggia,
Ch'io arda, mora, e caggia
Per quel ch'a peso non è pur un oncia:
E'l sangue a libra à libra
Mi suena, e sfibra, e'l corpo, e l'alma sconcia.
Gode ella, e si racconcia
Al suo fidato specchio,
Ove si vede eguale al paradiso.
E fatta altera, volta á me mi concia
Si stranamente, ch'oltre all' esser vecchio,
Mentre seco mi veggo in quel cristallo,
Più'l mio difformo per troppa paura,
E più fo parer bello il suo bel viso.
Ma pur, benche conquiso,
Godo de' miei sembianti il natío fallo:
E l'esser brutto stimo gran ventura,
S'io vinco a farla bella la natura.

CXXXIV.

Mentre i begli occhi giri
Donna ver me da presso,
Tanto veggio me stesso
In lor quanto ne i miei te stessa miri.
Da gli anni stanco, e vinto da i martiri,
Qual' io son, quelli a me rendono in tutto,
Tu ne' miei, qual tu se', splendi una stella.
Ben parche'l ciel s'adiri,
Che'n si begli occhi io mi veggia si brutto,
Tu ne' miei brutti ti veggia si bella:
Nè men crudele, e fella
Dentro, è ragion, ch'al core
Per lor mi passi, e in quella
De i tuoi mi serri fuore.
Perche'l tuo gran valore
A quel ch'è men di se cresce durezza,
E'l varco in te mi chiude, acciò ch'io'mpari,
Ch'amor richiede età pari, e bellezza.

CXXXV.

Nel mio ardente desio
Costei pur mi trastulla,
Di fuor pietosa, e nel cor aspra, e fera.
Amor non ti diss'io
Che e'non ne sare' nulla,
E che'l suo perde chi'n quel d'altri spera?
Or s'ella vuol ch'io pera,
Mia colpa, e danno fu prestarle fede,
Ma ingrato é chi più manca a chi più crede.

CXXXVI.

Credo che'l ciel mi ti mettesse in petto
Per nutrimento proprio di mia vita.
Perch'a mirar il tuo divino aspetto
Uno stimol perpetuo m'incìta.
E tanto piacer n'hò tanto diletto,
Ch'io paio il ferro, e tu la calamìta.
Vengoti a incontrar sempre col desio:
Con quel ti prendo, e stringo nel cuor mio.

Per gli occhi ti ricevo, e in me ti spargo
Come grappol d'agresto in una ampolla,
Che sotto il collo cresce ov'è più largo,
E vi rigonfia com'una midolla.
Poi ch'io t'ho dentro al cuor col cuor m'allargo
Quanto quel di tua immagin si satolla.
Nè mi puoi donde entrasti uscir del petto,
S'entro vi cresci, e l'occhio é tanto stretto.

Come quand' entra in una palla il vento,
Che'l medesimo fiato l'animella,
Come l'apre di fuor serra di drento,
Così l'immagin del tuo volto bella
Per gli occhi in mezzo all alma venir sento,
E passata colá, chiudersi in quella.
E qual palla da pugno, al primo balzo,
Percosso da' tuoi sguardi al ciel poi m'alzo.

Io m'alzo al ciel, ma senza il tuo sostegno
In precipizio al fin cadrò mortale.
Che sovra il mio desio debil m' attegno,
Se di tua grazia non mi reggon l'ale.
Proprio valor, natia virtù d'ingegno,
Se non m'affidi tu, nulla mi vale.
Che quanto co' tuo' sguardi vò più alto,
Più grave fia senza il tuo aiuto il salto.

Deh, se e' non basta ad una donna bella
Goder del vanto d'un amante solo,
Perche priva di lui perderebb'ella
La fama che in beltà l'innalza a volo,
Non spregiare anche me gentil donzella,
Né sia premio al mio amor tormento, o duolo.
Che per un solo sguardo il Sol non gira,
Ma per ogni occhio san che in lui rimira.

Forzato io sono ognor di seguitarti,
E di sì bella impresa io non mi pento.
E se tu non mi stimi un huom da sarti,
O un fantoccio senza sentimento,
E se dalla ragion tu non ti parti,
Spero ch'un dì tu mi farai contento.
Che'l morso il lusingar toglie a i serpenti,
Come l'agresto ch'alleghi altrui i denti.

Non passa notte mai, non passa giorno
Ch'io non ti scorga, e senta con la mente,
Nè scaldar mai si può fornace, o forno,
Ch'un mio sospir non fusse più cocente,
E quando avvien ch'io mi ti vegga intorno,
Sfavillo come ferro in fuoco ardente.
E tanto vorrei dir che per la fretta
Del favellar s'incocca la saetta.

Io sento dentro al cuor si grande ardore,
Che volendo esalar s'alza alle stelle.
E mentre pullulando uscir vuol fuore
Per mille vie mi buchera la pelle.
E s'a te vò ridir qual sia il mio amore,
Con pena ogni parola mi si suelle.
Ch'amor, si come l'anime incatena,
Le voci arresta e'l favellare affrena.

S'accade mai che tu mi rida un poco,
O saluti, o sia grazia, o scherno sia,
Mi levo come polvere per fuoco
O d'archibuso, o ver d'artiglieria.
E immatinente, fuor di me, m'affioco,
Perdo la lingua: e la risposta mia
Si smarrisce, e si sperde fra'l desio,
E quanto vorrei dire io tutto obblio.

Ma se forza non è contro umiltade,
Nè crudeltá può star contro all'amore,
S'ogni durezza suol vincer pietade,
Consola un dì davvero il mio dolore.
Una nuova nel mondo alta beltade,
Quel é la tua, dee haver pietoso il cuore.
Ch'una guaina, ch'è dritta a vedella,
Non può dentro tener torte coltella.

S' un giorno io sto che veder non ti posso,
Non trovo donna pace in luogo alcuno.
Se poi ti miro mi s'appicca addosso,
Come suole il mangiar fare al digiuno.
E par ch'io mi riabbia e ingrasso, e ingrosso,
Tanta sustanza da' tuo' sguardi aduno.
E in modo tale il cuor ne riconsolo,
Ch'è più'l conforto, che non era il duolo.

Io vo pensando al mio viver di prima
Innanzi ch'io t'amassi qual'egli era.
Di me non fu chi facesse mai stima,
Perdendo io tutti i giorni insino a sera,
E non credeva di cantare in rima,
E di ritrarmi da ogni altra schiera.
Or si sà'l nome, o per tristo, o per buono,
E si sá pure al mondo ch'io ci sono.

A GIOVANNI DA PISTOIA.

CXXXVII.

Io ho già fatto un gozzo in questo stento,
Come fa l'acqua a i gatti in Lombardia,
O ver d'altro paese che e'si sia,
Ch'afforza il ventre appicca sotto il mento.

La barba al cielo, e la memoria sento
In su lo scrigno, e'l petto fò d'arpia,
E'l pennel sopra'l viso tuttavia
Vi fa gocciando un ricco pavimento.

I lombi entrati mi son nella peccia,
E fò del cul per contrappeso groppa,
E i passi senza gli occhi muovo in vano.

Dinanzi mi si allunga la corteccia,
E per piegarsi addietro si raggroppa,
E tendomi com'arco soriano.

Però fallace, e strano

Sorge il giudizio che la mente porta,
Che mal si trae per cerbottana torta.

La mia pittura morta

Difendi or tu Giovanni, e'l mio onore,
Sendo il luogo non buono, io non pittore.

ALCUNE STANZE RITROVATE TRA ALTRE COMPOSIZIONI DI MICHELAGNOLO COSI SENZA COMINCIAMENTO.

CXXXVIII.

Nuovo piacere, e di maggiore stima
Veder l'ardite capre sopra un sasso
Montar pascendo or questa or quella cima,
E'l mastro lor con aspre note al basso
Sfogare il cuor con la sua rozza rima
Sonando, or fermo, et or movendo il passo,
E la sua vaga che ha'l cuor di ferro
Star co i porci in contegno sotto un cerro.

Qual'è veder sopra eminente loco
Di paglia, e terra un pastorale ospizio?
Chi ingombra il desco, chi fa fuora il fuoco
Sotto a un masso, e chi grato, e propizio
Gratta il porco, e l'ingrassa, e prende gioco,
Chi doma, e imbasta l'asinel novizio:
E'l vecchio gode dell'industre prole,
E siede fuor dell'uscio, e stassi al Sole.

Di fuor si vede ben quel che dentr' hanno,
Pace senz'odio, e senza noia alcuna.

E contenti a solcare i colli vanno,
Né fan ritorno fin che'l ciel s'imbruna,
Non han serrami, e non temon di danno,
Lascian la casa aperta alla fortuna:
Poi dopo l'opra lieti il sonno tentano,
Sazi di ghiande, e'n sul fien s'addormentano.

L' Invidia non ha loco in questo stato,
E la Superbia ognor ne riman fuora,
Avidi son di qualche verde prato,
La dove l'erba più lieta s'infiora,
Il lor sommo tesoro è un arato,
E'l vomero è la gemma che l'onora,
Un paio di ceste è la credenza loro,
La ciotola, e'l barlotto i vasi doro.

O Avarizia cieca, o bassi ingegni,
Che disusate il ben della natura,
E per oro acquistar provincie, e regni
Vostre imprese Superbia sol misura.
L'Accidia la Lussuria par u'insegni,
L'Invidia il mal d'altrui provvede, e cura.
Nè v'accorgete in insaziabil foco,
Che'l tempo è breve, e'l necessario é poco.

Color ch'anticamente al secol vecchio
Si trasser fame, e sete d'acqua, e ghiande,
Vi siano esempio, e scorta, e lume, e specchio,
E freno alle delizie, alle vivande,
Porgete al mio parlar grato l'orecchio:
Colvi che'l mondo impera, ch'è si grande,
Ancor desira, e non ha pace poi,
E'l villanel la gode co' suo' buoi.

D'ore e di gemme, e spaventata in vista
Adorna la Ricchezza va pensando.
Ogni vento, ogni pioggia la contrista,
E gli auguri, e i prodigi sta notando.
La lieta Povertà fuggendo acquista
Ogni tesor, ne pensa come, o quando,
Scevra ne i boschi in panni rozi, e bigi,
Fuor d'obblighi, di cure, e di litigi.

L'havere, e'l dar, l'usanze estreme, e, strane,
E'l meglio, e'l peggio, e le cime dell'arte
Al villanel son tutte cose piane,
E l'erba, e l'acqua, e'l latte è la sua parte.
Fa i conti suoi su le callose mane,
E quelle sono a lui calamo, e carte.
Che sia nel mondo usura non s'avvede,
E senza affanno alla fortuna cede.

D'altro non ha maggior cura, o desio
Che figli la sua vacca, e cresca il toro.
Onora, e teme, e ama, e prega Iddio
Pel gregge, per l'armento, e pel lavoro.
E'l Dubbio, e'l Forse, e'l Come, e'l Perche rio
Nol posson far, che non istan fra loro.
E col Vero, e col Semplice Iddio lega,
E'l ciel propizio alle sue voglie piega.

ERRATA.

LXXIV. and the five succeeding numbers, ought not to have been divided by Roman numerals; and in like manner CVII. includes the two succeeding divisions.

Page 220, line 11, *for* pride, *read* sighs.

In the beginning of the second stanza in the same page, *read,*

In retrospect, Alas! Alas!
I do not find in all the time that's past,
A single day that I can call mine own.

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